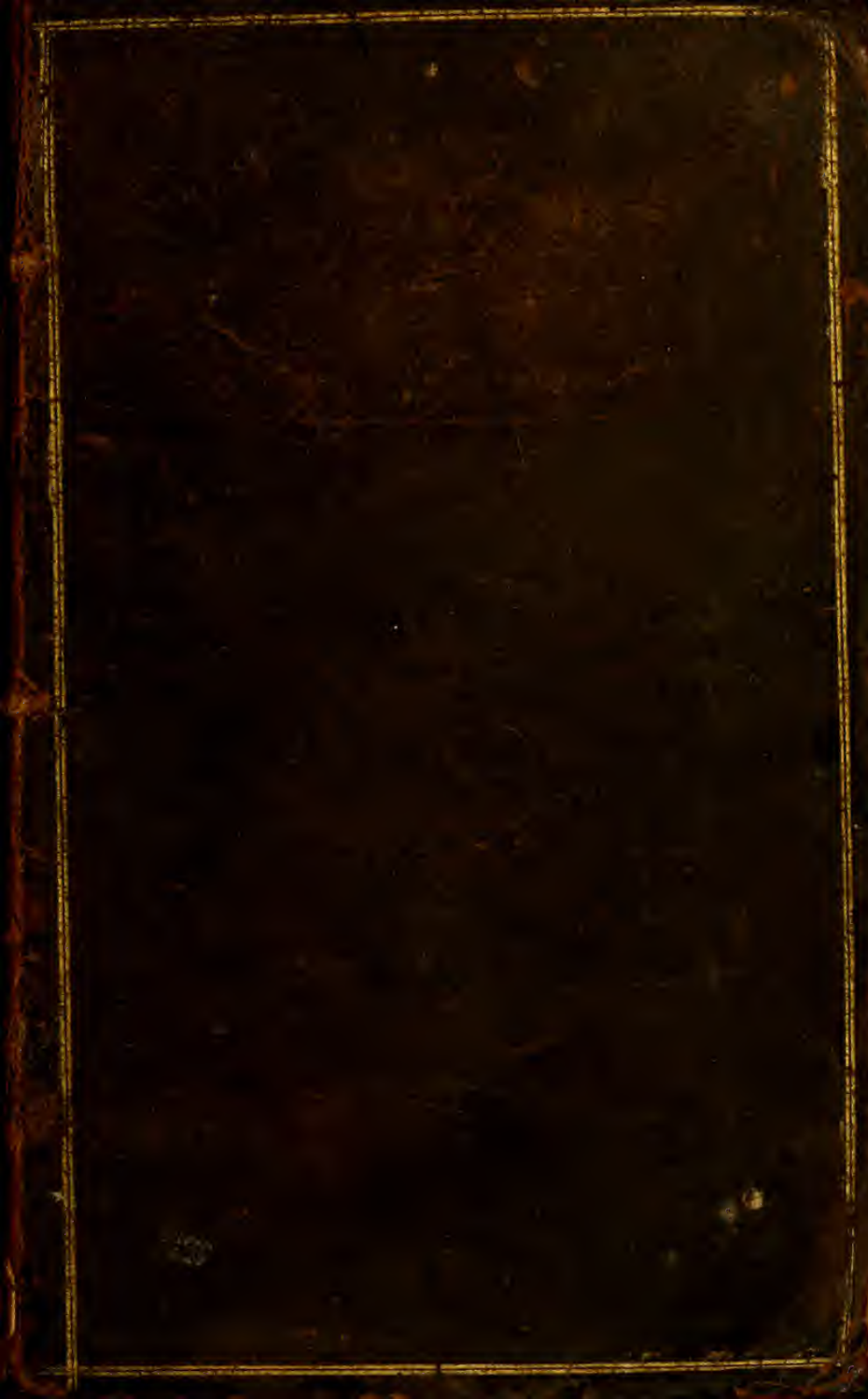




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ABRUMETELTAS.

WILLIAM L. L. L.

19
*Christ the Righteousness of his People ;
or, The Doctrine of Justification by
Faith in Him.*

REPRESENTED in several

At Kew.

S E R M O N S,

PREACHED at the

MERCHANTS LECTURE

A T

P I N N E R's - H A L L.

By *R I C H A R D R A W L I N.*

Published at the Request of the Committee of the
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T O T H E
G E N T L E M E N,
M E R C H A N T S,
A N D O T H E R S,

Who encourage and support the Lecture
at *Pinner's-Hall*.

ABR. TELTAS.

G E N T L E M E N,

FROM the time that you called
me to be a helper of your faith
and joy, in the service of a lec-
ture, that has been so extensively use-
ful, I hope I have had nothing more

in my view, than to explain and recommend, in the best manner I can, the several great and important truths of the gospel, as they might offer themselves in the course of that ministry, which I am fulfilling among you. And as some of my first thoughts led me to consider and state the doctrine of Justification, I was the more encouraged to attempt this, as I knew of what dear importance this article of our faith was with you; and that a well-meant design to place it in such a light, as might secure the complete honour of our justification to the righteousness of Christ, and the free grace of God in and thro' him, could not fail of meeting with a favourable reception among you, whatever imperfections might attend the execution of it; nor have my expectations herein been disappointed.

I DON'T

I DON'T pretend to offer any thing new upon a subject, that has so often employed the pens of our best and ablest Divines since the Reformation. My chief design has been to give an easy, methodical, and connected view of this capital article of our faith, in the several bearings and dependancies of one part of the subject upon another ; and I have with the more care and attention endeavoured this, as I apprehend the want of taking such a view of it has been, at least, one occasion of those unhappy mistakes, which some have fallen into about it, and of those many prejudices, which others have entertained against what seems to me to be the true scripture-doctrine in this point : Taking the whole together in that light, in which I have endeavoured to place it, I hope it will appear a scheme worthy of God, and consistent with itself ; and that, whilst it makes

the fullest provision for our pardon, gives him the united glory of all his perfections.

THE subject appears to me far from being a mere speculative point, as some are always labouring to represent it. They are interesting enquiries, and of the most extensive influence in the Christian life ; how my sins may be pardoned, and such a guilty sinner as I am justified in the sight of that holy and righteous God, with whom I have to do. The returning such an answer to these enquiries, as conscience might acquiesce in, and as may appear to have a plain foundation in the word of God, is the grand point which I have had before me, and which I have endeavoured never to lose sight of. And where God has made such things as these matter of serious consideration with any, such, I hope, will meet with something in the following discourses, that

that is suited to their taste, and, by the blessing of God, may be of use to them.

'TIS most certain, that we are guilty creatures in the sight of God, and must be considered as such in all our transactions with him. This is the state of all mankind without exception: *Every mouth must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.* We are chargeable with the breach of that holy and righteous constitution, under which we were originally placed. And 'tis under a feeling sense of this as our case, that we are to set ourselves to examine, what that righteousness is, which God hath appointed for our justification, and acceptance with him.

I LIKEWISE take it to be of great use, in settling the nature of this righteousness, to have right notions of the Law, it's purity, extent, and unchange-

able obligations. Nothing appears to me more evident, than that the Law, as requiring perfect obedience, is of perpetual and unchangeable obligation. And if we are under the obligations of such a Law, and are at the same time convicted of the breach of it, the next question will be, where may we be provided with a Righteousness for our Justification, in which the Law will acquiesce? In this case it will be in vain to fly to any righteousness, or works of our own, done in obedience to the Law; that were only looking for healing to the hand that gave the deadly wound: and therefore, when we have no such righteousness of our own, nor can any mere creature furnish us with it, this led me to consider the perfect, glorious, and everlasting righteousness, which we have in the Lord Jesus Christ, his whole active and passive obedience, as the only righteousness in and for which we are, or can be justified.

IT

IT has likewise been no small part of my design, to state the way in which, according to the constitution of the Gospel, we come to be interested in this righteousness, which I have shewn to be by Imputation; and this led me to examine at large the foundations upon which this Imputation stands, and how it takes place upon believing. After which I proceed to exemplify the high esteem which believers have for this righteousness; the glory and perfection of it in itself, as 'tis the righteousness of God-man mediator; how friendly the doctrine of Justification by it is to the interests of Gospel-holiness and obedience, and how a practical regard to it runs into all our religious transactions with God: what I have offered upon each of these heads, will, I hope, be found to have a plain foundation in the Scriptures, and to be every ways agreeable to the sentiments

sentiments and experiences of believers thro' the several ages of the Church. When noisy controversies are laid asleep, when wrangling and disputing are no more, and we come in a solemn hour between God and our own souls, to humble ourselves before him, and, under a conscious sense of guilt, address his throne for pardon and mercy, what but this righteousness alone can lie at the bottom of all our hopes?

I HAVE purposely avoided thro' the whole to make use of any scholastick terms, or nice and subtle distinctions, with which some have incumbered and obscured the subject, rather than thrown any light upon it. The Gospel, I apprehend, stands in no need of any of them: it shines brightest in it's own native simplicity, and by the authority and evidence of it's own truths, I am persuaded, will at length make it's way in the world, and triumph over all opposition.

position. The main principle that I go upon, is, that God will put honour upon the Law, and never justify the sinner in any way that shall reflect the least reproach upon it, as the rule of his moral government. And was this principle carried thro' all our reasonings upon this subject, it would effectually guard against some mistakes, which I apprehend to be of a dangerous nature, clear off every embarrassment, and fix our eye at once upon him, who is *the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*. It were strange indeed, if the Gospel should know no way of pardon and mercy, but at the expence of the Law.

IN transcribing these discourses for the press, I have taken the liberty to express my self a little more fully, than there was room for in the pulpit, upon one or two points, that have been the matter of much strife and angry debate among

among us. But I hope every thing of this nature has been attended to in that spirit which becomes the Gospel; I am sure it has been without the least design of giving offence to any. All I aimed at was, in as plain terms, and as short a compass as I could, to explain and establish what I take to be the true Scripture-doctrine of Justification, and of importance in it. I have likewise endeavoured to place in a proper light some particular passages of Scripture, which are of frequent consideration in the present subject. And as this is the principal occasion of some marginal notes, which are added here and there, I hope I need make no apology for them; tho' I am afraid it will want a great one, that these, with some other enlargements, which are wrought into the body of this work, have swelled it so much beyond what was at first designed. I have only to add, that whoever shall cast their eye over the
following

following pages, will soon observe with what pleasure I sometimes take leave to trace the footsteps of that truly great man, the venerable Dr *Owen*, who has treated this subject with that learning and judgment, which are peculiar to himself, and whose name, I hope, will be ever dear in your Lecture: But where I am particularly indebted to him, or any other of our writers, I have taken care to own my obligations; tho' 'tis possible I may sometimes have fallen into the same train of thoughts with others, who have gone before me in this argument, without being aware of it; and perhaps in a subject that has been so much laboured, it was hardly possible always to avoid it.

SUCH as they are, I now submit the following discourses to your candour and acceptance: and as they are made thus publick at the request of your committee, as far as they may be of use
to

to form any into the spirit and obedience of the Gospel, and establish them in that doctrine, which was the glory of the Reformation, and is the great foundation of our hopes, I trust my ends are answered. With this view I recommend them, and you with them, to the favour and blessing of God: whilst at the same time I earnestly entreat your continued prayers, that I may with faithfulness fulfil the ministry committed to me, and my self reap all the advantages of an interest in those precious and important truths, which I would recommend to the esteem and regard of others. I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your affectionate

And most Humble Servant,

RICHARD RAWLIN.

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E R R A T A.

PAGE 37. lines 6 and 7 *from the Bottom*, dele such righteousness of our own, and r. righteousness of our own, that is sufficient for our justification. p. 101. l. 25. dele that. p. 166. l. 14. after slain, r. for our sakes. There are several lesser mistakes of the press, which the reader is desired to correct.

S E R M O N

S E R M O N I.

ISAIAH xlv. former part of the 24th
verse.

*Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have
I righteousness.*

TIS the peculiar excellency and glory
of the Gospel, that in it we are pro-
vided with a righteousness for our
justification in the sight of God. I
shall, with the more advantage, apply this pas-
sage as speaking of such a righteousness, when
I have answer'd two Enquiries that at first view
offer themselves upon it — Who that *Lord*
is, that is here spoken of: and What that
Righteousness is, that is here intended.

As to the first of these Enquiries; we have
the fullest evidence that the *Lord*, here spoken
of, is the Lord Jesus Christ, from the Apostle's
applying this context to him, *Rom. xiv. 10, 11.*
where representing the evil of uncharitable
judging and condemning one another, he adds,
as a weighty reason to deter from this practice,
that we must our selves be judged by Christ,

B

for

for we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ : Christ will sit supreme judge of every man's state and actions, shall we then be hasty in the judgment that we pass upon our brethren ? And then the Apostle immediately subjoins, *for it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God* ; plainly referring to the words before the text, *I have sworn by my self, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear* : after which the words of the text follow in the closest connection, *surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness* ; in that Lord, to whom every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess, that is, the Lord Christ, who is Lord and judge of all. The same passage is likewise applied to Christ, *Phil. ii. 10, 11*. And viewing the context in this light, I cannot but think, it furnishes us with a strong and most convincing proof of the true and proper Godhead of Christ, according to the excellent note which a learned Commentator * hath given us upon it. “ We may further observe, says he, “ that what the Prophet speaks here of the Per- “ son of God, is applied by St Paul to Christ, “ *i. e.* to the second person of the blessed Tri- “ nity.” And after referring to some other passages of the like sort, where what is said of God in the Old Testament, is expressly applied to

* *Lowth* in locum.

to Christ by the writers of the New, he adds — “ many more such instances might be given, and all of them are plain proofs of the Divinity of Christ, and that the Prophets of the Old Testament had all along an eye to the times of the New, and spoke of the Messiah as God.” It seems therefore plain beyond all reasonable contradiction, that the *Lord*, here spoken of, is the Lord Christ.

It is likewise as plain, that the *Righteousness**, here intended, is a righteousness for justification; not only from the next verse, where the Prophet tells us, that *in the Lord*, that same *Lord, to whom every knee shall bow*, (for the context speaks uniformly of one and the same person) *shall all the seed of Israel be justified*; but likewise, because it is joined in the verse of the text, with another great blessing of the covenant, that we confessedly derive from Christ, and with which our justification is always inseparably united, and that is sanctification, intimated in our having *strength* in him; that *strength*, whereby the power of sin is

B 2

subdued

* Per *justitias* hic intellige beneficium longe amplissimum gratitæ remissionis peccatorum spectatum in vera sua causa, obedientia, passionibus, & morte Christi — De qua *justitia* Jesaias hic loquitur, docet ipse sequenti *inciso*, ubi ait, *in Jehovah justificabitur, & gloriabitur totum semen Israelis*. Quo ipso docet, per justitiam quam in Jehovah esse dixerat se intelligere causam justificandi cum voluntate justificantis conjunctam. Vult itaque dicere, in Jehovah esse id, propter quod peccator respiciens, & credens, & salvatorem respiciens in fide (immo omnis peccator, nemine quod ad gentem excepto) à peccatis absolvi, & jure ad benedictionem cœlestem donari queat, ac debeat. *Vitringa* in locum.

subdued, and the soul formed and fitted for all the duties of the divine and spiritual life. And thus if we interpret this clause, which I apprehend to be the true way of interpreting Old Testament prophecies and promises, by the plainer and clearer language of the New, we shall have the full sense of it in these and such like passages — that *Christ is made of God unto us righteousness, and sanctification* — that *by him all that believe are justified from all things* — that *we are to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus* — *are sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God* — and *are compleat in him*.

The words therefore, that we have before us, are to be consider'd as the language of the Church, ardently looking after, and embracing in the Lord Jesus, that righteousness which, and which alone, is available for our justification. And 'tis represented as the joint and harmonious language of the whole Church, what the saints in every age and place agree in, *surely, shall one say ; One*, and all that are taught of God, and acquainted with the methods of his grace. This is no party language ; 'tis what believing *Jews* and *Gentiles* alike speak, and all the called and saved of God agree in, according to the different discoveries that have been made of this truth thro' the several ages of the Church. The Old Testament Church was reaching after a justifying righteousness

ousness in Christ; and the New Testament Church has nothing greater to glory in. *The righteousness of God for this purpose is revealed from faith to faith*: And, in proportion to their several improvements in knowledge and grace, this is equally and alike the spirit and language of all believers in the world; *surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness*, or, as 'tis in the *Hebrew, righteousnesses* *, all that righteousness which we can want for our complete and everlasting justification.

What I therefore propose, is to take occasion from this passage to discourse upon that glorious and perfect righteousness for justification, which believers have in the Lord Jesus Christ, and will for ever seek and find in him.

And in treating upon this very important subject, the basis of all religion, the great article of the faith and hope of the Church, that I may throw all the light upon it that I can, I shall in the

First place, more particularly shew, what that righteousness is, which is to be had in the Lord Jesus Christ, and which the Church is here represented as seeking in him.

B 3

Secondly,

* Dicitur autem hæc justitia vati nostro צדקות *justitiæ* terminatione plurali, tum ob excellentiam ejus; tum ob amplitudinem, qua omnibus peccatoribus credentibus ad salutem sufficiat; tum ob effecta, quatenus amplectitur omnia jura filiorum Dei. *Vitringa* in locum.

Secondly, I shall enquire how we come to have an interest in this righteousness; how this righteousness, which is originally and subjectively without us, comes to be made ours for our actual and personal justification.

Thirdly, I shall consider that disposition and tendency of soul, which believers express and discover towards this righteousness, as it is here intimated in the language of the Church concerning it, *surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness*; there I seek and hope to find it.

Fourthly, I shall represent the fullness and extent of this righteousness; how complete it is in itself, and how fully it answers all the purposes for which we want it.

And when I have gone over these heads of discourse, I hope to find room to reply to the principal objections, with which this doctrine is wont to be assaulted.

And so to conclude with a practical Application of the whole. I am in the

First place, to shew what that righteousness is, which is to be had in the Lord Jesus Christ, and which the Church is here represented as seeking in him.

I have

I have already observ'd, that this is to be understood of a righteousness for justification; as grace for sanctification, and all the duties of new and acceptable obedience, is included in that *strength*, which we have in him. And as this passage is a comprehensive description of what the humble saint applies unto Christ for, and hopes to find in him, most certainly it must include in it this leading and eminent blessing of the covenant: Agreeable to what is said of him elsewhere — that he is *the Lord our righteousness* — and *was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*. Once more; we are directed in the context, ver. 22, to look unto him for salvation; *Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth*: But is there any being saved without a righteousness for justification? If saved we must be justified; but how, and in what way can we be justified, but only by the righteousness of Christ, and the free grace of God in and thro' him? *We are justified by his blood, and saved from wrath through him*, Rom. v. 9.

It is, therefore, of a righteousness for justification that our Text speaks, as what is provided in Christ, and is to be had in him. And what this righteousness is, and wherein it consists, and that we have it in Christ, when we have it not in our selves, nor can have it elsewhere, is what I am now to represent: And this is what I shall endeavour by laying down a short series of propositions, plain and easy to

be understood, which, I hope, will give us a view of this subject, without any perplexity or confusion.

Prop. I. That man is naturally and necessarily under a law to God.

Prop. II. That man being under a law to God, some righteousness is absolutely necessary to his justification.

Prop. III. That every righteousness is not sufficient for this purpose, but it must be such a righteousness, as fully answers to the purity and perfection of that law under which man is, and which God hath given him as the rule of his obedience.

Prop. IV. That we have no such righteousness of our own, nor can any mere creature furnish us with it. From whence will follow,

Prop. V. That if ever we are justified, it must be by the righteousness of Christ, consisting in that complete and perfect obedience, which he hath performed to the law in our room and stead.

Each of these propositions I shall endeavour to illustrate, and vindicate as I go along.

Prop.

Prop. I. That man is naturally and necessarily under a law to God. This results as from the supereminent dignity of the divine nature, so from the necessary and unalterable relation between God and man, as the one is the Creator, and the other his creature. For man being the creature of God, owing his existence to him, and having received all his powers and faculties from him, he is hereby necessarily placed in a state of dependance upon God, and subjection to him. And as man was created an intelligent and free agent, and therein capable of moral government, this strengthens the proof of his being under a law to his great Creator. He was made capable of knowing, and loving, and serving, and worshipping God, and what more fit, and right than that he should do so? It is, I apprehend, impossible to conceive of a creature without being under a law to this. This is what is commonly called the *law of nature*, and the *moral law*. Angels are under such a law, and it was the violating this law in some instance, in which it called for their homage and obedience, that was the sin of the Angels that fell. *Adam* in Paradise was under such a law; and it is in it's principal articles engraven upon the hearts of all mankind. Hence the Apostle instances in the Heathens, who having not the *written* and revealed *law*, are nevertheless *a law to themselves*, whilst their consciences either acquit, or condemn them according as they

they either conform to, or violate this law in the plain dictates of it, *Rom. ii. 14, 15*. Thus all mankind are naturally and necessarily under a law to God, a law to love, and fear, and serve him, and conform to his will in whatever instance he shall make it known. This law is of universal extent, and perpetual obligation, and in the nature of things unalterable for ever. The supreme cause and author of all things must be Lord, and law-giver to his creatures: And indeed, as I said, it is impossible to conceive of a reasonable creature without his being under such a law as this. This is the first proposition that I would lay down; that man is necessarily under a law to God. I would only observe farther, that this law is for substance the same with that, which was given to man in Paradise; which was afterwards solemnly promulgated upon mount *Sinai*, and is summarily comprehended in the Ten Commandments; and is a law, that calls for perfect holiness, and unfinning obedience as the necessary condition of our acceptance with God. But I do not insist longer upon this now, because the purity, extent, and unchangeable obligations of the law, will come to be a little more distinctly consider'd under another proposition. I go on therefore to

Prop. II. That such being the relation between God and man, and man being necessarily under such a law to God, some righteousness

ousness is absolutely necessary to his justification. I determine not now what this righteousness is, that will be explained under another proposition, but only that some righteousness is absolutely necessary for this purpose.

And the proof of this will easily be deduced from the necessary perfections of the divine nature, as they are exercised and display'd in the government of man, according to the nature of that law, under which he is to God.

The holiness of God is an essential and unchangeable perfection of the divine nature, whereby he is necessarily and infinitely removed from every kind and degree of moral evil, and all possible participation therein. This is in a very emphatical manner ascribed unto God, *Thou only art holy*, Rev. xv. 4. *There is none holy as the Lord*, 1 Sam. ii. 2. It is the acclamation of the heavenly host, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty*, Rev. iv. 8. And *he is glorious in holiness*, Exod. xv. 11. as tho' God never appeared more in his glory, than when he appears in the glories of his holiness. His holiness is the harmony of his other perfections, and what adds a lustre to them all. Nor can God, because of the infinite rectitude and perfection of his nature, otherwise than hate sin, and conceive an everlasting displicency at it. *He is a God of purer eyes, than to behold evil, and that cannot look on iniquity*, Hab. i. 13. And how will his hatred of sin, and displicency at it shew itself, not in the acquittal
and

and justification of the sinner, not in the admitting him to favour, and heaping upon him the effects and blessings of his favour; but on the contrary in his condemnation and destruction, unless there be some suitable reparation made for the offence, which by sin is given him, and by which he may evidence his eternal abhorrence of it *. As the men of *Bethshemesb* cried out, under that awful display of the holiness of God which they had before their eyes, *who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?* 1 Sam. vi. 20.

Hence sin is described as that *abominable thing that he hates*, Jer. xlv. 4. And *His soul* †, his purest and most perfect nature, is said to lothe the sinner; *my soul also lothed them*, Zech. xi. 8. A God of spotless holiness cannot but maintain an everlasting opposition to sin, as most contrary to his righteous nature and holy will. And when there is in God such an everlasting opposition to sin, by reason of his absolute and most perfect holiness, can it be supposed

* The displeasure of God is eternal and irreconcilable against sin; for sin being absolutely contrary to his holy nature, he is eternally contrary unto it: If there be not therefore a way to separate the sin from the sinner, the sinner must lie under the displeasure of God; no displeasure can be manifested without some marks of it upon the person that lies under that displeasure — God can as soon lay aside his purity, as always forbear his displeasure against an impure person; it is all one, not to hate it, and not to manifest his hatred of it. *Charnock*, Vol. I. p. 158.

† *Peccatum est תועבת נפשו abominatio animæ ipsius*. Prov. vi. 16. *Animæ*, id est, ipsi essentix, & essentiali sanctitati ipsius. *Wulf. Oeconom. Lib. I. Cap. V. §. 28.*

supposed that he should pardon it, and admit the sinner to his favour and the effects thereof without such satisfaction, as may testify to the world his highest indignation against it? I might add, that if God was thus to pardon sin, and admit the sinner to an interest in his favour and the effects thereof, without any such satisfaction, or method to shew his highest indignation against it, in one instance, he might do it in another, and a third, and so on, till every sinner and every sin should be pardoned without such satisfaction; and what would the consequence of this be, but either a stripping God of his holiness, or excluding his holiness from all concern in the moral government of the world? Hence it is, that the Psalmist deduces the punishment of the wicked from the purity of the divine nature, or from God's necessary and unchangeable love of holiness, *Psal. xi. 6, 7.* And God himself has declared, upon a solemn occasion, *that he will be sanctified in them that come nigh unto him, and before all the people he will be glorified, Levit. x. 3.* He will be known to be a holy God in all the dispensations both of his providence, and grace. The holiness of God therefore seems to make some righteousness absolutely *necessary*, for the pardon and justification of a sinner.

God is likewise a just and righteous God. God's justice is that essential attribute of his nature, which disposes and determines him to render

render to every man his due, and according to his works *. As it is strongly put, *Gen. xviii. 25. Shall not the judge of all the world do right?* The supreme Lord, and judge of the world cannot but be just, and do right. And in what an awful glory does God himself represent the honour of this attribute, when, after he had given the brightest displays of his grace and goodness, he adds as the necessary character of his justice, *that he will by no means clear the guilty*, *Exod. xxxiv. 7. By no means*, and upon no account whatever discharge, and acquit the guilty sinner without a suitable satisfaction made to his justice, the foundation of that righteousness in which he may acquit, and justify him. God will proceed according to the exactest and most unchangeable rules of justice in his government of the world, and in his dealing with sinners. As *Elibu* clearly argues upon a view of the perfections of God. *Job xxxiv. 10, 11. Far be it from God, that he should do wickedness, and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity. For the work of a man shall he render under unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways.* And this is what *Job* was strongly impressed with, *Job x. 14. If I sin, then thou markest me, and wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity ;*
not

* *Justitia Dei nihil aliud est, quam certa quædam manifestatio sanctitatis ejus in regimine creaturarum rationalium, qua non tantum ut summus Legislatores æquas præscribit, sed etiam ut summus Judex præmia ac pœnas dispensat.*

not do it, never acquit, nor justify me without a suitable reparation to the honour of thy justice, which has been injured by my sin. And this made *Him* cry out with so much anxiety, when taking a view of his sins as committed against God, *chap. vii. 20. I have sinned, and what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men?* The sacred rights of the divine government must be taken care of, and the honour of God's justice as the guardian of the law provided for, before there can be a way opened out for the pardon of sin, and the justification of the sinner. Upon this foot it was, that *Joshua* so earnestly remonstrated to that people, when he saw them professing so forward a zeal for the service of God, without any due sense of his majesty, holiness, and glory, *Josh. xxiv. 19. Ye cannot serve the Lord; for he is a holy God: he is a jealous God, he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins.* The holiness and jealousy of God, his unspotted purity, and ardent zeal to vindicate the honour of his law, and maintain the unalienable rights of justice, are an eternal bar in the way of the sinner's pardon without a suitable satisfaction and righteousness.

And whereas some have been ready to object, " that this does detract from God's absolute dominion and sovereignty, and set him in this respect beneath his own creatures, that whereas they can quit their rights, it should be supposed, he cannot forego his :"

It

It is answer'd in the words of a great man *, who hath treated this subject with a justness, and dignity of thought peculiar to himself.

—— “ It hath not been said, that *God can forego none of his own rights*, it is plain he doth, when having the *right to punish* a sinner, he by pardon confers upon him *right to impunity*; but he cannot do it to the *prejudice and dishonour of his glorious excellencies*, and the *dignity of his government*. And therefore if some reparation were requisite to his doing it, *consistently with the due honour and reputation thereof, justice towards himself* required he should *insist upon it*; which is no more a detraction from his *absoluteness*, than *that he cannot lye*, or do any thing unworthy of himself. He is *so absolute*, that he can do *whatever he pleases*; but so *just*, that he cannot be pleased to do *an unrighteous thing*.”

I might farther add; that as the case now stands, the unchangeable veracity and faithfulness of God to his own word oblige him to insist upon a suitable satisfaction and righteousness, before the sinner can be acquitted and justified: For God hath not only given man a law as the rule of his obedience, but in that law, as we shall have occasion to observe a little more fully under the next proposition, hath threatned sin with death. It is the eternal voice of God speaking in his law, *the soul that sinneth*

sinners, shall die ; and the wages of sin in death ; that is, in case of disobedience, the punishment due to sin, must be inflicted upon the sinner in its full extent. Upon this foot the Apostle has determined the state of all mankind, in relation to the law, to be the most guilty and miserable, *Rom. iii. 19.* Now we know that *what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law : that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.* Now the declarations of God in his law being so express and full, his veracity and regard to his own word stand engaged against sin, and to punish it, unless there be a suitable reparation made for the honour of the divine government, and which shall be a salvo to the truth of God in his threatning.

Besides, “ where laws are enforced by threat-
 “ nings, we must suppose something in every
 “ legislator, that *moves and inclines him* to exe-
 “ cute those threatnings upon such as shall
 “ transgress his law. And this is as necessary as
 “ the former : because, as the laws would be
 “ ineffectual without *sanctions*, so those sanc-
 “ tions would be equally insignificant, with-
 “ such an *inclination* in the legislator to put
 “ them in execution. The execution itself in-
 “ deed may be stopped for some very weighty
 “ reasons. But the general disposition, and in-
 “ clination to execute them must be supposed ;
 “ otherwise, let the threatnings be never so
 “ severe, and the declarations to punish uttered

“ in never such high and peremptory expressions, no man would be under the terror of them, so as to be affrighted thereby from sinning. And these are things (as an excellent writer * has observed) that are to be found in all *laws*, and all *law-givers*, whether *human* or *divine*; the reason being the very same and common to them all.”

I can't, therefore, but conceive, that the necessary and unchangeable perfections of God, and which are exercised by him as the supreme and righteous governour of the world, his *holiness*, *justice*, and *truth*, engage him to insist upon a suitable satisfaction, as the foundation of a justifying righteousness, before the sinner can be acquitted and justified: Nor will God ever extend pardoning grace in any way, that shall reflect the least dishonour upon these perfections; and were our minds filled with suitable and worthy apprehensions of them, how low would it humble the guilty sinner at his foot, and how would *every mouth be stopped before him*? The sinner's conscience would tell him in loud language against what a glorious Majesty he hath sinned, and what he hath to expect from the justice, purity, and righteousness of that God against whom every sin is committed. *Thou, even thou art to be feared, and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?* Psal. lxxvi. 7. This made the penitent Psalmist in so moving a manner reflect upon his own guilt, *against thee,*

* Dr Edward's Preservative, Part iii. p. 85.

thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight : that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

Pfal. li. 4. God will appear, and be known to be a holy, just, and righteous God in all his dispensations; nor can he do any thing, but what he can do with the honour of all his perfections †. There must therefore be some righteousness, or other, in order to a sinner's justification. The several perfections of God as exercised in the government of man, according to the tenor of that law which he is under, make this absolutely necessary. Without this God will not hold the sinner guiltless, how then can he justify him? And as justification is either an accounting, or a declaring a person righteous, it looks to me like a sort of contradiction in terms, to talk of being justified without a justifying righteousness. This is the second proposition, that some righteousness is absolutely necessary. And having, I hope, sufficiently establish'd this, I now proceed to

Prop. III. That as some righteousness is absolutely necessary to a sinner's justification; so every righteousness is not sufficient for this purpose, but it must be such a righteousness as answers to the purity and perfection of that law,

C 2

which

† Quod enim Deus non potest respectu *unius* attributi divini, respectu *nullius* potest : seu quod per aliquam proprietatem essentialem fieri non potest, id per omnem fieri nequit. Dr *Owen*, Diatribe de just. divin. p. 206.

which God hath given man as the rule of his obedience. And the reason of this is very plain, because God will have his law honoured, and established. His great design in his moral government of the world is *to magnify the law, and make it honourable*. He will never therefore justify the sinner in any way that shall eclipse the glory of the law, nor shall pardoning grace raise its throne upon the dignity and obligations thereof.

In order to examine this matter to the bottom, it will be necessary to observe a few things, concerning the nature and perfection of the law ; the end and design of God in giving it ; together with the unchangeable force and obligations of it.

I observed before, that God hath given man a law as the rule of his obedience ; I now add, that this law is a law of absolute purity and perfection ; a law in which we may as in a glass or spotless mirror behold his own glorious and adorable perfections. A holy God will never stain his government by giving his creature any other than a holy law. The law indeed is nothing else but a transcript of the absolute purity and rectitude of the nature, and will of God. It requires nothing, but what it becomes an infinitely wise and holy God to require ; and forbids nothing, but what it becomes an infinitely wise and holy God to forbid. It principally, and in the first place, requires us to love, and fear, and worship him, and, as I have
already

already observ'd, what more fit and right than this? Hence, we can't but observe, that the law is perpetually described in scripture by those characters, which speak its absolute rectitude and most extensive perfection. 'Tis called the *royal law*, Jam. ii. 8. what is inscribed with the authority of God himself; and the *perfect law of liberty*, Jam. i. 25. the most comprehensive rule of that obedience that we owe to God, as our truest liberty lies in a dutiful subjection to it. In the Psalmist's language, *the law of the Lord is perfect, his statutes are right, and his commandments pure, and exceeding broad; and he esteemed all God's precepts concerning all things to be right.* Psal. cxix. 128. *His testimonies that he hath commanded are righteous,* (Heb. *righteousnesses*,) and *his law is the truth*, ver. 138, 142. The Apostle speaks of it under the like honourable terms, *Rom. vii. 12. Wherefore, the law is holy; and the commandment holy, and just, and good;* what hath an intrinsick goodness in it, and is every ways fit, and right, and good. 'Tis moreover a *spiritual law*, *Rom. vii. 14.* its empire extends to the inward as well as the outward man, and all the powers of our natures are controuled by it. It takes cognizance of the thoughts, and judges every word, and action; and the least contrariety to the righteous nature and will of God, be it either in the heart or in the life, is forbidden by it. So absolutely pure and perfect is the law of God.

This holy and perfect law of God, as it was admirably suited to the state of man in innocence, was given him for two great and important purposes: The *one*, to regulate and direct his obedience, or be the standing rule of his duty in all the parts of it; for as the law is nothing else but the signification of the will of God as enjoined by his authority, what can be a rule of duty to his reasonable creature if this is not? The *other* to be a covenant between God and him, according to which man was to expect life and blessedness, or death and misery, either as he should or should not come up to the terms of it. For God having, for wise and holy ends, deliver'd out his law to man in form of a covenant, hath annexed a suitable and solemn sanction to it. On the one hand, in case of perfect obedience performed unto it, there was the promise of life and blessedness; On the other, in case of the failure of such obedience, there was the threatening of death and misery; *obey and live, sin and die*, these were the equal and righteous terms of this covenant. The latter of these sanctions is expressly mentioned in the original contract, which was enter'd between God and man in paradise, *Gen. ii. 17. In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* And I can't but think, that the reward in case of obedience, would have bore a full proportion to the punishment to be inflicted in case of disobedience. As the Apostle speaks of the commandments being ordained to

life,

life, Rom. vii. 10. and, describing out of *Moses* the nature of that righteousness which the law calls for, he tells us, that *the man that doeth those things shall live by them*, Rom. x. 5. Agreeable to which we read of the *tree of life in the midst of the garden*, Gen. ii. 9. which man would have had a right to eat of, had he continued in his obedience; and which, I suppose, was so called, not because it had, as some have fondly imagin'd, a natural virtue to maintain and preserve the animal life of man without being subject to any decays, 'till God should have seen fit to have translated him; but because it was a symbol, or sacramental sign and pledge, of immortality, from which therefore man was restrained, as having no right to eat of it after the fall. But however it be as to that, the threatening in case of disobedience was express and plain, *the soul that sinneth shall die*. — Now man sinning, violating this holy and righteous law, and breaking covenant with his God, falls under its curse and penalty; becomes subject and liable to that, and in consequence thereof as a guilty sinner is bound over to misery and death. And this the scripture represents in the plainest and strongest terms, as the sad case of all mankind by reason of sin. — *For we have before proved, both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin*. — Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.

God.——Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.—And the offence is by one man to condemnation.-- This is what is commonly and properly called the *covenant of works*, the holy and righteous constitution, under which man was originally placed.

It only remains to consider, whether this law is abrogated, or whether 'tis still obligatory and in force; and then we shall soon bring the enquiry to an issue, what the nature of that righteousness is, which is necessary to our justification. It is readily granted, that the law consider'd as a covenant is vacated and abrogated, and vacated and abrogated never to be renewed more. The first sin that man committed superseded all use of the law for this purpose, and render'd our justification by it absolutely impossible; and the introduction of another covenant, a covenant of grace, in which we are to be justified in a quite different way, and upon quite different terms from those of the law, did *ipso facto* as much abrogate the law as a covenant, as if there had been an explicit and formal repeal of it. And as things are now constituted upon the foot of this covenant, the attempting justification by our own righteousness, or, which is the same thing, by an obedience performed to the law as a covenant, is subversive of the whole gospel. The present enquiry, therefore, only respects the commands of the
law;

law; and can any thing be more plain, than that they are still obligatory upon us, and are indeed, of perpetual and unchangeable obligation? They are founded in the necessary, and unalterable relation between God and man, as the one is the Creator, and the other his creature; and we must first extinguish this relation, before the duties which result from it, and are required in the law in consequence of it, can cease. Our Saviour gives us the sum of the moral law in supreme love to God, and the most ardent love to our neighbour, *Matt. xxii. 37, — 40.* And will any say, that we are not under the law that requires these? Or that the law, that requires them, is not of perpetual and unchangeable obligation? is abrogated, or indeed ever can be? and what is there that can be supposed to vacate and abrogate it? What--- Shall the entrance of sin abrogate it? either weaken its obligations, or any ways narrow or entrench upon its commands? because man has dared to sin, must God quit his throne, and recede from his own righteous commands? Because man has seen fit to make a stop in his duty, shall the law make a stop in its obligations? Or, can it ever be imagined, that God gave man such a law, a law of such purity and perfection, and that was inscribed all over with his own image and authority, to be vacated and set aside as soon as given? If the law lost its power as soon as man departed from his duty, such a glorious law was given to man, only for a
day

day or two, perhaps but for an hour or two ; or, as one * says, *the moment* of man's integrity. And the Apostle abhors the thought, that there should be any thing in the grace of the gospel that should have a tendency this way, Rom. iii.

31. *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: we establish the law: Establish it for ever, and in its utmost extent, as a rule of duty, being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,* 1 Cor. ix. 21. And in what strong and express terms has our Lord declared, Mat. v. 17, 18. *that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it; And that till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled?*

Nor is it any objection against what hath been said concerning the necessary and unchangeable obligations of the law, that the Apostle says, 1 Tim. i. 9. *that the law is not made for a righteous man.* Some Interpreters place the emphasis in the word *κεῖται*, *is not made, is not laid upon a righteous man* as a burden †. So 'tis made for the wicked, and lies upon them as the greatest burden they have in the world ; nothing so burdensome to a carnal mind as the way of duty, *they said, moreover, what a weariness is it,* Mal. i. 13. whereas the good man *delights in the law of God, after the inward man, and none of his commandments are* grievous

* Mr *Thomas Case*, a pious and good writer of the last age, who has several useful hints upon this subject. See his *Mount Pisgah*, Part II. p. 144.

† *Lex justo non est posita ; i. e. imposita tanquam onus.*

grievous to him. But I rather think, that the Apostle speaks here of the law as armed with its penalty and terrors *. So 'tis properly made for persons of those vicious dispositions, which he immediately describes, and is their most powerful, and, in many cases, their only restraint from sin, being like the disaffected subject, that is only kept in awe by the terror of the *statute against treason*; and such *statute* may very properly be said *to be made for him*, whilst the good man, like the dutiful subject, moves upon nobler principles and motives.

Nor is there any more force, in what is objected from what the Apostle says of our being *dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we might be married to another*, Rom. vii. 4. The Apostle is speaking there not of the law as a rule of duty, for so, a little onwards in the chapter, he describes it as most holy, and pure, and good; but of the law consider'd as a covenant; and so we are *dead to it*, and deliver'd from it by the grace of the gospel, being by that *married to another*, and having our standing under another, and very different covenant: And 'tis under the same reference that the Apostle considers the law, *ch.* vi. 14, when he speaks of
believers

* In lege Dei post peccatum duo sunt consideranda. I. *Norma* & directio ad ὑποταγήν. II. *Vis frenandi, & compescendi terrore & metu*, ac denique *juste condemnandi*. Quando ergo Apostolus docet, legem justo positam non esse, non intellegit id de primo ac præcipuo legis opere, quod ipsi essenziale est, sed de altero illo accidentario, quod per & post peccatum superaccessit, & à quo iusti per Christum liberati sunt. *Wils. Oeconom. Lib. I. cap. iii. sect. 9.*

believers being *not under the law, but under grace.*

From what hath been said, 'tis easy to see, what the nature of that righteousness is, which the law calls for, and consequently which is necessary to our justification; the law calls for a righteousness absolutely sinless and perfect, and such righteousness is absolutely necessary to our justification, in as much as the law, which calls for it, is of perpetual and unchangeable obligation. And, indeed, as the law calls for such a righteousness, what ever righteousness we bring if it be not such, the law will except against it; nor can it admit of any thing for justification, but what is like itself absolutely perfect, whilst it remains, as it ever will, what it is *. Let it therefore be remember'd in all this enquiry, that there is no need, as one has justly observed, of a *new law*, but of a *new nature*, a new person, or a second *Adam* to fulfil that law which is already in being, and must for ever remain as the great instrument and rule of God's moral government. This is the third proposition, that as there must be a righteousness

* Accedit hæc quoque ratio, quod nihil in justificationis negotio valeat, nisi quod perfectum plane sit, & legi Dei in omnibus respondeat. Nam in justificatione est ἐνδειξις δικαιοσύνης τῆ Θεῶ. Rom. iii. 25, 26. Illa autem exigit, ut δικαίωμα τῆ νόμου πληρωθῇ, Rom. viii. 4. Non potest impleri legis jus nisi perfecta obedientia — Apostolus innitur isti axiomati, justiciam, quæ valitura sit coram tribunali Dei, debere omnibus numeris perfectam esse: talia vero quum nulla quorumcunque hominum opera sint, concludit, nulla qualiacunque opera ad justificationem consequendam quicquam conferre. *Wif. Oeconom. Lib. iii. cap. viii. sect. 42. 54.*

ness, so all righteousness will not serve the purposes of a sinner's justification, but it must be such a righteousness as fully answers the perfect rule of righteousness, which God hath given us in his law. And this brings me to

Prop. IV. That we have no such righteousness of our own, nor can any mere creature provide us with it.

First, We have no such righteousness of our own. None that answers to the purity and perfection of the law ; nor indeed any righteousness of our own in, and for, which we may hope to be justified. I would here a little consider, how this matter is stated in the scripture, and then, more particularly, represent the insufficiency of all our own righteousness for justification in the several branches of it.

In the general; the scripture is most express and full in excluding works of every kind and sort from all agency and influence in a sinner's justification. The Apostle after he had, in a long and labour'd discourse, represented the misery and guilt, in which both *Jew* and *Gentile*, that is all mankind, are involved by sin, when he comes to draw his argument to a point tells us, that *all are under sin*, — *that there is none righteous no not one*, — and *that every mouth must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God*, Rom. iii. 9, 10, 19. Upon which he advances it as a certain and undeniable

able truth, *that by the deeds of the law, any obedience of their own paid to the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight*, v. 20. And after he had, in opposition to the way and method of a sinner's justification by his own righteousness, represented the way and method of justification by the grace of God, and the righteousness of Christ, *a righteousness*, as he calls it, *without the law*, he establishes the same conclusion over again in the same words, ver. 28. *Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.* And in his epistle to the *Galatians* in what full and express language does he lay down the same truth, ch. ii. 16? *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ; that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*

Had man, indeed, continued in his integrity, and yielded to the law that perfect obedience which it called for, the law would have pronounced him righteous, and he had had a valid claim to all the blessings, that were promised in it; as the Apostle argues, *that if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law*, Gal. iii. 21. But instead of this, how must we now drop a tear over it; *the law being become weak through the flesh*, Rom. viii. 3. 'Tis become weak; for ever incapacitated and disabled

bled from justifying us : and how is it become *weak*, whence is it that the law hath lost its justifying power ? The Apostle lays the charge right, *through the flesh*; that is, through the corruption and sin of man. Fallen, sinful man is unable to reach that obedience, which the law calls for, and hence 'tis that the law is unable to justify him. This is the great *impossible of the law* †. The law were as able to justify us as ever, if we were but as able to keep it ; but the law can never pronounce that person righteous, that hath not a righteousness to answer it. I am

† It seems very plain, that the Apostle is speaking here of the inability of the law to *justify* us, or free us from the guilt and condemnation of sin, and not of its weakness to *sanctify* us, or destroy the habits of sin in us, (as Dr Hammoud expresses it, " that the law of *Moses*, was too weak to reform, and amend " mens lives ; and Mr *Locke*, to master the propensities of the " flesh.") For he speaks of Christ's doing what he did, and *which the law could not do*, under the notion of a sacrifice, or as he expresses it, *for sin* (*ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτίας*, by a sacrifice for sin —) *he condemned sin in the flesh* ; so condemned it by his death and sufferings, that it shall not condemn them that are in him. And 'tis with regard to this effect of the death of Christ, that the Apostle speaks of believers being delivered from condemnation, ver. 1. and *made free from the law of sin and death*, ver. 2. 'Tis likewise as plain, that he meant the whole of the *moral*, and not of the *ceremonial law* ; that law, which is said ver. 4. *to be fulfilled in us*, as the proper end of the death of Christ. Whereas Christ did not die to enable us to fulfil the ceremonial law, but, on the contrary, to free us for ever from the obligations of it. This therefore is the *τὸ ἀδύνατον τῆ νόμου*, the great impossible of the law, its weakness to acquit from condemnation, or justify us. And this the Apostle speaks of, not as what was owing to any original defect in the law, but altogether to our guilt and corruption, which had subjected us to the curse of it.

I am well aware of what some have pretended and pleaded; that by the *works of the law*, which the Apostle excludes from having any share in our justification, are to be understood only the observances of the *ceremonial*, and not the works of the *moral law*. But it seems most demonstrably plain to me, that tho' the Apostle does most certainly dispute against joining *Moses* with *Jesus*, the works of the ceremonial law with faith in Christ in justification, yet that this is only one branch of his design. He disputes against justification by the works of that law, *by which is the knowledge of sin*, Rom. iii. 20. which what is it, but the moral law? as himself tells us, ch. vii. 7. *that he had not known sin, but by the law: not known concupiscence to be sin, except the law had said, thou shalt not covet:* and this he describes afterwards in that chapter, as that law, *which was ordained to life*, ver. 10. which the ceremonial law never was; and as *spiritual*, and *whose commandments are holy, just, and good*, having, as I said before, an intrinsic goodness in them. He disputes against justification by the works of that law, which faith, *the man which doeth those things shall live by them*, Rom. x. 5. the very form and tenor of the moral law; and by the breach of which the whole world was subjected to condemnation, Rom. iii. 19. and *from the curse of which Christ came to redeem*, Gal. iii. 13. — He disputes against justification by the works of that law, against which the *Gentiles* sinned,

sinned, which could not be the ritual and ceremonial law of the *Jews*, which was never promulgated to them, nor were the obligations of it laid upon them, nor did they ever attempt justification by it. Finally,—against justification by the works of that law, *which we establish by faith*, which, to be sure, is the moral law, the ceremonial law, on the contrary, being for ever vacated by the grace and faith of the gospel.

And agreeably to this way of arguing, how does the Apostle state the manner of *Abraham's* justification to be by faith exclusively of all works? Rom. iv. 2, 3. *For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.* Not his works, which would have left room for boasting, but his faith *was counted unto him for righteousness*, by which therefore alone he was justified in exclusion of all works. And in what follows, the Apostle opposes justification by faith and by works as absolutely inconsistent. These two ways of justification can never be reconciled; inasmuch as the one would make justification to be a debt, whereas 'tis plain by the whole series of the Apostle's discourse, that there is no claim of merit in our works; consequently, that our justification is not a debt due to us for them, but an act of the freest grace; for so he proceeds, ver. 4, 5. *Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but*
D
believeth

believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness: Where the Apostle represents those whom God justifies, as *ungodly* *; i. e. before justified; who therefore can have no works of their own, that are consider'd as the causes of their justification; *faith*, therefore, *is counted to them for righteousness* in opposition to, and in exclusion of, all works whatever: conformably to which he farther instances in the next verse, that *God imputeth righteousness without works*; adding, ver. 16. *that therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace*. God hath on purpose appointed our justification to be by faith, that the whole may appear to be of grace. As the Apostle, when entering upon this subject, sets out with this as his grand proposition, ch. iii. 24. *that we are justified freely by his grace, thro' the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; freely and by grace*, all of pure, unmerited, unmixed grace: 'Tis impossible for words more fully to express, that every thing is so adjusted in the way of our justification by the death of Christ, that grace may shine out therein in its full glory. Nor can we be too careful how we admit *works* into a copartnership with *grace* herein, when the Apostle so expressly excludes them from

* I am inclinable to think with Mr *Locke*, that when the Apostle speaks of God's *justifying the ungodly*, he points to *Abraham*, who was a Heathen before God called him. And if so; what an unanswerable argument does this furnish us with against justification by works? For what works could such a one have (a *Heathen*, and that had lived in the practice of idolatry all his days) that can be supposed to have an influence into his justification? Compare Gen. xii. 1, &c. with Josh. xxiv. 2.

from all agency in our salvation, *Eph. ii. 8, 9.* and so directly opposes them to grace, as what exclude and destroy each other. *Rom. xi. 6.* *And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace : otherwise work is no more work.*

Finally, If justified by any righteousness of our own, or if we could and did produce any obedience of our own, that was the matter and cause of our justification, how would this turn the covenant of grace into a covenant of works? The first covenant was therefore called a covenant of works, because man's own obedience, performed upon the foot of that covenant, was to be the ground and reason of his justification, and his title to every blessing promised in it. Now, if our sincere, tho' imperfect, obedience is to be in the new covenant the ground and reason of our justification, in the same manner as our perfect obedience was in the first covenant; I see not, but that hereby the covenant of grace is directly turned into a covenant of works, or so blended and confounded with it, that its beauty is greatly defaced, and its nature changed thereby. For, as one has observ'd upon the occasion, *Majus & minus non mutant speciem.* " Let works be perfect, or imperfect, " it will be a covenant of works, so long as " works are the condition of it."

The sum of the whole is; that the scripture doth in the fullest and most express manner

exclude all sorts of works, not only those of the ceremonial, but of the moral law, from all agency and influence in a sinner's justification. The being justified by such works would lay a foundation for boasting, whereas none have, nor can have any reason for boasting before God ; the admission of such works would interfere with the freeness of that grace, which runs through the whole of a sinner's justification, and make it a reward, not of grace, but of debt; and alter the very genius and complexion of the covenant of grace, and turn it back into a covenant of works.

I should now have proceeded to instance in the several branches of our own righteousness, shewing how insufficient and unequal they are for the purposes of our justification : We have none inherent in us, nor any performed by us, that can be pleaded for this. And as we have no such righteousness of our own, so neither can any creature provide us with it. It remains therefore, that this righteousness is only to be had in the Lord Jesus Christ ; in his most perfect and complete obedience performed to the law in our room and stead, according to the express and blessed language of the text, *surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness* ; all that righteousness which I want, and which is no where else to be had. But these things will deserve to be deduced in a separate discourse.

S E R M O N II.

I S A I A H xlv. former part of the 24th
verse.

*Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have
I righteousness.*

WHAT we have at present before us,
is to explain and settle the nature of
that righteousness, which we have in the Lord
Jesus Christ for our justification. And hav-
ing gone over three propositions which were
laid down for this purpose, we are now to pro-
ceed to a fourth, on which some entrance has
been already made, which is this,

Prop. IV. That we have no such righteouf-
ness of our own, nor can any *mere* creature
provide us with it. This proposition consists of
two parts, which I shall distinctly consider.

First, We have no such righteousness of our
own; neither any inherent in us, nor that is or
can be performed by us.

Not any *inherent* in us. That is all, as the church readily acknowledges, *as an unclean thing, and as filthy rags*, impure and imperfect; what therefore can never be pleaded at the bar of God for our Justification, *Isa.* lxiv. 6. Those that know the depravity and corruption of their own hearts, must abhor the thoughts of having their dependance upon any righteousness inherent in them. Has not sin prey'd upon all our beauty, and cover'd us with the most loathsome deformity in the sight of God? And where the grace of God advances its work in truth, and in its highest glory, still how far is the soul from being perfectly discharged from all these defilements and impurities? *Job* cries out as in agony, *Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee?* *Job* xl. 4. And elsewhere, *whom tho' I were righteous*, much more holy and pure from sin than I am, *yet would I not answer, but I would make supplication to my judge*, ch. ix. 15.* And does not this posture, a posture of confusion, and shame, and silence in the presence of God become us? Or if we open our mouths, shall it not be in a penitent acknowledgment of our guilt, and humble entreaties of grace for pardon? In the spirit and language of the convinced publican, *Luke* xviii. 13. *God be merciful to me a sinner.* “ Lord, we confess our
“ sins, the numberless charges that thy law has
“ against us, and the imperfection of our own
best

* Vid. *Schultens* in loc. ut & in vers. 20, 21, &c. qui infra citantur.

“ best righteousness and holiness; we readily
 “ plead guilty, and are altogether as an *unclean*
 “ *thing*; nothing but sovereign mercy can re-
 “ lieve us, and nothing but a better righteous-
 “ ness than our own can recommend us to thy
 “ acceptance.” *Job’s* heart was so impressed
 with this sentiment, that, in the chapter last re-
 ferr’d to, he brings it in over and over again, and
 still with fresh earnestness: See ver. 20, 21. *If*
I justify my self, mine own mouth shall condemn
me: if I say I am perfect, much more improved
 in holiness than I am, *it also shall prove me per-*
verse. Though I were perfect, yet would I not know
my soul: I would despise my life. He had such de-
 basing apprehensions of himself, that, if he were
 to trust in his own righteousness for pardon and ac-
 ceptance with God, he should count his life little
 worth upon that foot. So again, ver. 30, 31. *If*
I wash my self with snow-water, and make my
hands never so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in
the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me;
 or, as the margin reads it, *make me to be abhor-*
red: His meaning is, that after his utmost en-
 deavours after, and improvements in, holiness,
 if upon the foot thereof he was to be justified,
 he should be in the sight of God, no other, nor
 better, than one that had been roll’d all over in
 the filth and mire of a ditch. And that he meant
 it of his own personal and inherent righteous-
 ness being so insufficient for his justification, is
 evident from what follows, ver. 32. *For he is*
not a man as I am, that I should answer him,

and we should come together in judgment. He could appeal, as he does in the next chap. ver. 7. *that he was not wicked*, was not an habitual sinner; but his mind was filled with such affecting apprehensions of the majesty, holiness, and glory of God, that he saw it absolutely impossible, be his own personal and inherent righteousness what it will, upon that bottom to stand in judgment before him.

And were our minds filled with such views of God, how would it humble us in the dust? And what would our own best righteousness appear for our justification in the sight of his spotless purity, and everlasting glory? *Is there any number of his armies, and upon whom doth not his light arise? How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean, that is born of a woman? I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.* In short, were we acquainted more with our own hearts, did we converse more with the pollution of sin, that cleaves to our bosoms, spreads all over our nature, and infects all we have and are, we should soon see our own righteousness to be imperfect and defective, and every ways insufficient to bear us out in our dealings with an all-holy and righteous God. We have lost our original righteousness, and in the room thereof the pollution of sin spreads through all our powers, and mingles with every principle, and spring of action.

And

And as nothing inherent in us can be our justifying righteousness, so neither can any thing performed by us. If any thing performed by us could be such righteousness, or supply the place of it, it must be either our doing, or our suffering, or our believing. But,

1. Doing, or our active obedience, will not suffice. For that, like our inherent righteousness, is every way blemish'd and defective; and blemish'd and defective in the same degree, in which the other is so. For our best obedience can rise no higher than the spring from whence it flows. An imperfect principle of holiness in the heart (and such is the principle of holiness in the best of men) can't produce perfection of holiness in the life. Hence the Wise Man observes, *that there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not*, Eccles. vii. 20. And the Apostle Paul, who was so tall in every christian grace and attainment, how does he whilst struggling with the remains of indwelling sin, mourn in the most touching manner, *that to will was present with him, but how to perform that which is good he found not?* For, says he, *the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do*, Rom. vii. 18, 19. He was drawn as he complains, *ver. 23.* into a sort of unwilling captivity to sin, whilst he found in many and sad instances the power of corrupt nature too strong for all the interest of grace. And this made him cry out with so much bitterness of soul, *ver. 24.*
like

like a man that was fighting it out with an enemy, that he would be glad to get rid of upon any terms, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* And whilst the christian is thus maintaining a doubtful conflict with his own corruptions, and often over-powered by them, either betray'd to the sad neglect of duty, or drawn into the frequent commission of sin, can he ever trust in his duties for his justification?

To the same purpose the Apostle *James* acknowledges, that *in many things we offend all*, Jam. iii. 2. that same Apostle, who, according to the mistakes of some, is so zealous for the doctrine of justification by works. We have no lamb in all our flocks but what is blemished; our purest incense has some smoke still ascending with it: The obedience of a fallen creature must be mixed with some sin; the Apostle takes himself into the account, *in many things we offend all*; in the strictest line of duty there's some aberration from the pure and perfect law of God; whereas did we offend but in one point, this would be enough to deface our own righteousness, and demolish the whole building, that is raised upon it. As the same Apostle has observ'd, that *whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all*, ch. ii. 10. He violates the sacred authority of the law, which is the true reason of all that obedience we owe it, and so becomes guilty in the sight of the law, as if he had transgressed

transgressed it in every instance; *as it is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10.

And upon this foot it is, that the Apostle Paul, when professedly stating the ground and reasons of our justification, tells us, *that by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight*: for which he adds this remarkable reason, *that by the law is the knowledge of sin*, Rom. iii. 20. * The law is so far from justifying the sinner, upon the account of his own works of obedience, that it convicts him of sin in all he does; shews sin cleaving to all his powers, and mingling with all his performances: This the law sees, and charges home upon us; and for any to seek to be justified by the works
of

* Mr *Locke* has frequently remark'd in his notes upon this epistle, that where we meet with the word νόμος *law*, without the article, it ought always to be understood not of the *law of Moses*, but of *law* in general, by which he understands the eternal rule of fit and right with a penalty annexed; and that so it must be understood in this verse, being without the article. He would therefore have it render'd *by deeds of law*, i. e. (as he explains it) "by actions of conformity to a law requiring the performance of the δικαίωμα Θεοῦ, the right rule of God (mentioned chap. i. 32.) with a penalty annexed, no flesh can be justified." But we don't want the support of such a piece of criticism to prove, that by the *law* here the Apostle means the *moral law*. He speaks of that law, by which is the *knowledge of sin*, which, what can it be, but the *moral law*, the immutable rule of duty, and of which every sin is the transgression? Rom. vii. 7. 1 John iii. 4. not to add, what Mr *Locke* has justly observ'd, that the Apostle's declaration here is concerning all men, πάντα σάρξ. But we know that the Heathen world were not under the law of *Moses*.

of the law, what is it but seeking to be justified by that, which is the instrument and means of our condemnation? Hence, the Apostle determines upon the state of all without exception, who seek to be justified by their own works, *that they are under the curse*, Gal. iii. 10.

This made the Psalmist, in so warm a manner, deprecate God's proceeding in judgment with him upon the foot of his own best duties, and most perfect obedience, *Psal. cxliiii. 2. And enter not into judgment with thy servant : for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.* As elsewhere he cries out with great concern, *who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults*, *Psal. xix. 12.* He saw he was sinning daily, and daily stood in need of cleansing and pardoning grace. So *Nehemiah*, when he had been exerting himself in the most laudable manner to sanctify the sabbath, and the house of God, how does he plead, that *God would remember him concerning this, and spare him according to the greatness of his mercy?* *Neh. xiii. 22.* He pleads for being spared and pardoned in those duties, in which he had expressed the most becoming zeal for the honour of God, so far was he from expecting to be justified thereby. And our Lord has taught us, *when we have done all those things which are commanded us, to say, we are unprofitable servants*, *Luke xvii. 10.*

I might advance one step farther : Could we now, and did we now, obey the law perfectly in thought,

thought, in word, and in deed, and should we continue to do so to the last period of life, yet would not this be satisfactory to the law, and sufficient for our justification. And the reason hereof is very plain, because we are already sinners, and our present and future obedience, be it never so complete and perfect, is but a just debt ; a debt that is daily growing, and that we ought to be daily paying, what therefore can be no satisfaction for guilt that is already and long ago contracted. Such abundant evidence have we, that we can never be justified upon the foot of any obedience, which it is possible for us to perform to the law of God.

And this seems to me to be the true reason, why the law was promulgated with so much pomp and terror upon mount *Sinai*, and the very strictness and tenor of it as a covenant of works repeated and inserted in that dispensation, under which the *Jews* were : Not that they were strictly and properly speaking under a covenant of works ; but God would give them a home and striking conviction of the absolute impossibility of their being justified by their own works, that so by being beat off of all dependance thereon, they might be gradually trained up for the fuller grace of the gospel dispensation, and brought to speak the language of the text, *surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness*. And thus, according to the Apostle, *the law was a school-master to bring them unto Christ, that they might be justified by faith in him*, Gal. iii. 24.

And

And in this light I would consider the answer which our Lord gave the young man, who came with so much seeming earnestness to enquire of him, *what good thing he might do, that he might have eternal life*, Matt. xix. 16. Our Lord saw him tinctur'd all over with a vain confidence in his own righteousness, when he was at the same time an utter stranger to the holiness and perfection of that law, by obedience to which he expected to be saved; and accordingly he frames his answer, *if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments*, ver. 17. Not that he put him upon a covenant of works, and to work for life; but he calls him to the obedience that the law required with a kind design of convicting him of the imperfection and vanity of those duties, which he valued himself so much upon, if by this he might awaken him (as he saw him serious and thoughtful) to a farther enquiry after what other and better way of pardon and life God had appointed: Tho', as the event sadly shew'd, his strong attachment to the world prevented this, and carried him off at once.

Nor is what has been said, concerning the impossibility of being justified by our own duties, at all inconsistent with what the Apostle says, 1 Joh. iii. 7. that, *he that doeth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous*. 'Tis true, *he that doeth righteousness*, so far as he doeth it, *is righteous*; a man, that has a real principle of grace in his heart, and from that principle obeys God and practises righteousness,

righteousness, so far is righteous, that is, is a truly good man. In which sense *Zechariah* and *Elizabeth* are said to be righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless, Luke i. 6. But this is vastly different from having a righteousness that is perfect and pleadable for our justification. That is the peculiar glory of him, whose name is, *the Lord our righteousness*.

It has been farther objected, that not the bearers of the law, are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified, Rom. ii. 13. And so they shall, if they come up to the terms of it *; For *Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them*, Rom. x. 5. 'Tis indeed strange, that any should plead this passage for a person's being justified by works, when the whole drift of the Apostle's discourse is to shew, that the *Jews*, who were so fond of the law, must quit the terms of it, if ever they hoped to be justified; and his design in particular in these words, is, by representing the strictness of the terms of the law, to pave the way for what he had to offer at large concerning the gospel-method of justification by the righteousness of Christ, and the free grace of God in and thro' him. And as our own duties and works can't justify us; So neither

2. Is

* "The doers of the law, they who exactly perform all that is commanded in it, shall be justified." *Locke's* paraphrase upon the place.

2. Is there any thing in our sufferings, that can avail for this purpose. 'Tis true, that immediately upon our failure in that debt of obedience, which we owe to the law of God, another debt takes place, a debt of sufferings. But who can bear the penalty of a broken law, and live? Will not that, where it lights, for ever weigh down the sinner, and overwhelm him in everlasting misery? The damned in hell, who are paying this debt, well know they never can be discharged from the arrest of justice under which they are laid, because they can never come to the end of payment, *Matt. v. 26.* Justice will still have farther and farther demands upon them; and when millions of years are rolled away in the most exquisite torments, an eternity of sufferings will be still to come. And the reason of this is plain, because as there is an infinite evil in sin, as being committed against a God of infinite Majesty and Glory, the punishment to which it subjects the sinner, must likewise be infinite: Most certainly, in the future and eternal state, the punishment of sin will be exactly proportionate to the demerit of it. But because the sufferings of a finite creature can't be infinite in degree or value, they must be infinite in duration. Hence we read, and the solemn truth is so often repeated, that *their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched*, *Mark ix. 44, 46, 48.* and the wicked are said to go away into everlasting punishment,

punishment, Matt. xxv. 46. and *the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever*, Rev. xiv. 11.

And let me farther observe, that if the damned in Hell can't by their unconceivable torments so satisfy the law and justice of God for sin as to obtain a discharge, what a fond imagination must it be, that any of the afflictions and sufferings of the present life can be available for this purpose? O! Surely, may some foolish ignorant people be ready to say, I am feeling so much, and suffering so much here, there will be nothing for me to suffer hereafter. There's so much gall and wormwood in my cup, and I am exercised with so many afflictions and sorrows, that surely the bitterness of death must be past! But let me ask such vain dreamers, whether they suffer more than they have deserved? or whether they imagine, their sufferings can do that for them, which the sufferings of the damned in Hell can't do for them? The sufferings of the damned can't wipe out their debt, nor procure their discharge; what is there then in thine, that they should be an atonement and satisfaction for thy sins? And we know what estimate the Apostle made of his afflictions, that were so many and heavy, *Rom. viii. 18*. He was far from esteeming them either satisfactory to divine justice, or meritorious of the divine favour. Indeed, if thy afflictions are sanctified, they will prove saving, but never satisfactory

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factory

factory to law and justice : If they subdue thy pride, and humble thee down at the foot of God ; if they divorce thy affections from a vain and empty world, mortify thy corruptions, and form thee into the divine image and likeness ; if they drive thee out of the creature, and out of thy self, bring thee meekly to submit to God's correcting hand, and quicken thee in thy applications to the Lord Jesus Christ, whose grace alone can support and comfort thee under all thy trials ; in these and such like instances afflictions work for good, and thou shalt have eternal reason to bless God for them, as the Apostle observes, that *our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 17. Bnt still all is owing to what Christ hath done and suffer'd ; whilst his righteousness is our only protection from wrath, and his merit our only title to life and glory. But then,

3. And lastly, Faith, some may think, is under the gospel our justifying righteousness ; what succeeds in the new covenant in the room of that perfect obedience, which was required in the covenant of works, and is, according to the gracious and milder terms thereof, what we are now to plead and trust in for our justification in the sight of God ; *for what saith the the scripture ? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness* — And *the scripture foresaw, that God would justify the Heathen*

Heathen by faith — and being justified by faith we have peace with God, &c. &c.

Indeed, the doctrine of justification by faith is a great and glorious truth, and of utmost importance in the gospel scheme. The scripture is more clear and express in no one article than in this, and 'tis readily granted that there can be no justification without faith. But I could never see any reason to depart from the old establish'd doctrine of the reformation, that faith justifies only instrumentally, relatively, or objectively ; that is, that 'tis not faith itself which justifies us, but the object of faith, that righteousness which faith apprehends, to which faith relates, and which it always eyes and pleads for this purpose. Or else, that 'tis in believing, that that righteousness, in and for which we are justified, terminates upon us, upon believing God imputes it, and in believing we receive it. Nor, indeed, can I see, how 'tis possible to exclude such relation and respect of faith to the righteousness of Christ as our only justifying righteousness, and substitute faith or any thing else in the room of it, so that that shall be the matter and cause of our justification, without bringing in a justification by our own righteousness and works, against which the Apostle argues with so much force and evidence in his epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*. For if faith itself were the matter and cause of our justification, it must be, as one has well observed, “ either as it is an habit, or as “ it is an act. Not as an habit,” or as being

the great vital principle of holiness and new obedience, “ for so it is an eminent branch of the “ righteousness of sanctification,” and to be justified by faith, consider’d in this view, would be to be justified by our own inherent righteousness. “ Nor as it is an act, so that the act of believing is imputed to us for righteousness †. For so it is a work, what coincides with doing, and is an essential and leading duty of the moral law, *Job*. vi. 29. 1 *Job*. iii. 23. and to be justified by faith, consider’d in this view, would be to be justified by works ‡. And indeed, there needs no new law to make faith in Christ a duty, to believe in God, which way soever he shall reveal himself, being an everlasting duty of the moral

† The very act of faith, says Dr *Whitby*, and not the object of it, *viz.* *Christ’s righteousness*, was imputed to *Abraham*, and is imputed to us for righteousness. See on *Rom.* iv. 23. and *Gal.* iii. 6.

‡ Dr *Goodwin*, in answer to the question, whether it be the act of faith that justifies, or that is accounted a man’s righteousness, says, Surely no, for God might have took works as well; if he would have took it as an act, he might have took any act, love itself. That great man farther adds, “ There is this “ reason lies in the bottom of my spirit against it, besides all that “ else the scripture saith against it: That if when I go to God “ to be justified, I must present to him my believing, as the “ matter of my righteousness, and only Christ’s death as the “ merit of it, what will follow? Two things plainly to me: “ First, that the heart is taken off from looking upon the “ righteousness of Christ wholly, and diverteth to its own “ righteousness in the very act of believing for righteousness. “ Secondly, every man that will believe to be justified, and go “ to God, and say, Lord justify me: He must have an evidence that he hath faith, for how else can he present that “ as the matter of his own righteousness? Now millions of “ souls cannot do this, they were in a poor case, if they should “ be put to it.” Vol. I. Part ii. p. 301.

moral law. Besides, Faith is plainly distinguished from that righteousness, by which we are justified, *Phil. iii. 9. Rom. iii. 22.* and we are said, *to receive the gift of righteousness*, the gift of that righteousness, by and for which we are justified, *Rom. v. 17.* Faith itself therefore cannot be this righteousness.

I might observe the same concerning that great gospel grace and duty of repentance. Not that the righteousness of Christ can ever be applied to us without that repentance which always accompanies faith, or that, whilst we continue in a state of impenitency, we can have any pleadable interest in it; but still we must remember, that tears pays no debts; and were our heads waters, and our eyes a fountain of of tears, yet would not this wash away the stain, or expiate the guilt of one sin. Besides, as there is so much in our most perfect repentance that wants pardon, how can our repentance be supposed to be our title to it?

I might farther add, that if our faith, repentance, and sincere obedience, do not come up to the demands of the gospel any more than they do to the commands of the law, then they can never be, either in whole or in part, our justifying righteousness. And do we any of us either love or serve God, as the gospel requires us to love and serve him? Do we mourn over our sins with that measure of godly sorrow that we ought? or believe in Christ with that steadiness and fixedness of soul, with which the gospel requires us to believe in him? Or does the

gospel require us to love God less, or fear and serve him less, or trust in him less, than the law obliges us to? Is any degree of holiness abated in the gospel? If so, some sin is countenanced, for every abatement of holiness, either in the principle or practice of it, is a sinful imperfection *. 'Tis true, the gospel hath provided a covering for these imperfections; but what can that be, but only the spotless, and perfect robe of Christ's righteousness?

In short, either this new law, according to which we are supposed by some to be justified by our faith, repentance, and sincere obedience, does call for perfect obedience, or it does not. If it does call for perfect obedience, how can we be justified by an imperfect obedience paid to it? And wherein does it differ in its commands from the moral law, which likewise calls for perfect obedience? If it does not call for perfect obedience, Then — (1.) There is no law subsisting since the fall, which does call for perfect obedience, the moral law being supposed to be abrogated to make way for this. Then -- (2) God hath given his creature a law that allows of sin, in some degree or other; or else, we must say, -- (3.) That the imperfections of believers are no sins. Sins they cannot be against the moral law, for that is supposed not to exist, *and where there is no law, there is no transgression*. Sins they are not against this new law, for that calls for no more than sincere obedience, and that

* See Owen of justificat. p. 336. and Clarkson's Sermons, p. 227.

that is supposed to be performed. And if the imperfections of believers are no sins, then need they not confess them, nor be humbled for them ; mourn over them, nor watch and pray against them : And what a wide door would this open to the most licentious practices. But perhaps it will be said, that tho' this law calls for perfect obedience, yet it accepts of imperfect : Accepts it, for what ? for justification ? Then it accepts of that as a righteousness for justification, which, according to its own requirements, is not a righteousness ; in other words, declares a person righteous, that, according to what itself commands, is not righteous. But then as a justifying righteousness is not to be had in our selves, so neither,

Secondly, Can any mere creature provide us with it. *The sea saith it is not in me ; the depth saith it is not in me ;* and if we were to traverse the whole creation in search of it, we should return miserably disappointed. Neither angels, nor arch-angels can furnish us with it : They have nothing to spare from that spotless righteousness, with which themselves appear before the throne of God ; we know little of the laws of that world by which they are governed ; nor is there any alliance between angels and us, that should give us any claim or interest in any righteousness of theirs. The poor blinded *Jews* in their day, and the poor *Heathens* under their greater darkness then and since, how were they deceived and misled, whilst they trusted in this and the other sacrifice, as tho' they

were sufficient of themselves for the expiation of sin? The Apostle tells us, that *'tis not possible for the blood of bulls, and of goats to take away sins*, Heb. x. 4. The most numerous and expensive sacrifices under the law, *God would them not*, nor had they any efficacy of themselves for this purpose, “ The butchery of so
 “ poor a creature can’t be any compensation,
 “ for that, which is a disparagement of the
 “ Creator of the world. What alliance was
 “ there between the nature of a beast, and
 “ that of a man? An inferior nature can never
 “ atone the sin of a nature superior to it. There
 “ is, indeed, in the groans of those dying crea-
 “ tures some demonstration of God’s wrath,
 “ but no bringing in an everlasting righte-
 “ ousness, nor any vindication of the honour of
 “ the law.” * And if there was no efficacy for the expiation of sin in any, or in all, of those sacrifices, which were of God’s own appointing, what efficacy can we suppose for this purpose in those sacrifices, which obtained in the Gentile world, all of which were of human invention, and many of them accompanied with circumstances of horrid cruelty, and endless superstition? And in what language does the Apostle thunder against those, who would add the rites and observances of the ceremonial law to faith in Christ, as the ground and reason of justification? *’Tis making Christ die in vain.* — *Such Christ shall profit them nothing,*

thing, — He is become of none effect to them, whoſoever they are that are juſtified by the law ; They are fallen from grace ; — gone off from the truth of the goſpel in its moſt eſſential article, and whiſt they are ſeeking juſtification in this way, 'tis impoſſible they ſhould be in a juſtified ſtate.

Or, perhaps, the poor deluded Papiſt will ſend you to look for ſomething like a juſtifying righteouſneſs in the merit and righteouſneſs of ſaints : And thus they, who load the doctrine of juſtification by Chriſt's imputed righteouſneſs with ſo many reproaches, take refuge in the imputed righteouſneſs of we know not whom. Being juſtified by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is treated with the utmoſt contempt, as tho' it were being juſtified by a putative, an imaginary righteouſneſs ; when at the ſame time they ſhall place all their confidence in the merit and righteouſneſs of the ſaints, and votaries of their own Church, many of whom we know not who, nor whence, they are. This is their miſerable notion, whereby they, who have the conduct of their conſciences in that Church, pick the pockets, and cheat the ſouls of thoſe, who are unhappily betray'd into their deluſions. If a man, ſay they, has been a great ſinner, and has no works of his own to juſtify him, the Church is intruſted with a bank of merit, from whence he may be furniſh'd with a pardon at ſuch and ſuch a rate, as the nature of his offences is, or as the wiſdom of the Church ſhall direct.

direct. But you'll say, How came the Church by such a stock of merit? — They go on to tell you; that as there are some who fall short, and are notoriously defective in their duty, so there are others, who on the other hand exceed; they perform works of supererrogation, as they call them, that is, they do more than the law of God requires, or obliges them to do: As for instance, if a man gives his estate to have so many thousand masses said for the dead, or to build an hospital, or if he performs such penances, or goes such pilgrimages; the law of God, say they, did not require this man to do these things, he does therefore more than what the law obliges him to, and therefore from what he does must arise a merit. Now that merit, which arises from this surplussage of obedience, is thrown into one common stock, and dealt out by those who have the management of it, as people are willing or able to pay for it, or as the wisdom of the Church shall see fit to direct *. But, what a refuge of lies
is

* The council of *Trent*, in their Catechism, has laid a plain foundation for all the superstitious practices of this sort, which have obtained in the church of *Rome*, in the account which they give of that article of the creed, which relates to the *communion of saints*. By virtue of this communion they tell us, — “ That
“ whatsoever things are piously and holily performed by *one*,
“ these things belong to *all*, and by charity, which seeks not
“ her own, they are made profitable to them. Wherefore,
“ Christ has taught us this form of prayer, to say, *our* bread,
“ not mine; and the rest after the same manner, not taking
“ care for our selves only, but for the salvation and profit of
“ all.” Elsewhere, explaining this doctrine they carry it yet
further,

is here? As tho' a man could not only come up to, but go beyond the extent and obligations of, that law, that requires us, *to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and our neighbour as our selves.* Had we a due sense of the purity, and perfection of the law of God, how would this level all our vain pretensions to merit? Or as tho' we could merit at God's hand by any excesses of obedience, when 'tis most certain, *that in many things we offend all.* And if a man can't merit for himself, how shall another merit for him? Or, if he could merit, how is it possible, I should be the better for his merit? Rather his supererogations and exceedings, will rise up in judgment against me, and condemn me for my criminal defects. Indeed, this whole doctrine of "human satisfactions to be made
" for

farther, shewing upon this foot how satisfaction may be made to God; having observed, how we appease God by prayer, they farther represent the use and advantage of afflictions for this purpose, ——— "But because many and diverse afflictions
" and calamities press us while we are in this life, the faithful are chiefly to be taught, that they who with a patient mind endure whatsoever labour and inconvenience God
" sends upon them, have gotten full matter of satisfaction and
" merit:" — adding, "That herein the immense goodness
" and mercy of God is to be celebrated with the highest praises
" and thanksgivings, who has granted this to human frailty,
" that one can satisfy for another; as therefore neither the foot
" performs its office for its own profit, but for the profit of the
" eyes also; and again, that the eyes see, is not to be limited
" to their own advantage only, but for the common advantage
" of all the members: So among us, the offices of satisfaction
" ought to be esteemed common." *Catech. ad Parochos. Part I. Sect. xxv. Part II. Sect. cvi, cvii, cviii, cx.*

“ for sin, and of the power of the *Pope* to apply
 “ one man’s merit to the forgiveness of an-
 “ other man’s offences ; and all this after such
 “ a manner, and upon such terms as is now
 “ practised in the church of *Rome*, of all this
 “ there is not one word in any passage of holy
 “ scripture, but much to the contrary.” ‡ ’Tis
 indeed subversive of the whole gospel, and of
 all religion, and all morality at once. Let then,
 the poor deluded *Papist* hug a relick, or go a
 long pilgrimage to the shrine of a saint, hunt
 after an indulgence, and buy or borrow from
 another’s stock, when he finds his own ebbing
 out ; O my soul ! when thou hast no merit nor
 righteousness of thine own, learn to look to
 him, concerning whom ’tis said, *neither is there*
salvation in any other : for there is none other
name under heaven given among men where-
by we must be saved, Acts iv. 12. It remains
 therefore, and this was

Prop. V. That if ever we are justified, it
 must be by the righteousness of Christ, consist-
 ing in that complete and perfect obedience,
 which he hath performed to the law in our
 room and stead. ’Tis intimated in this propo-
 sition,

1. That the obedience which Christ per-
 formed to the law was complete and perfect.
 And so it was in every view : *He fulfilled*
all righteousness, and ever did the things
 which

‡ See *Wake’s sermons*, Vol. I. p. 58.

which pleased God. His was an unblemish'd obedience, and what every ways corresponded to the absolute purity and perfection of the law in all its requirements. The law, as we have seen, consists of two parts, the precept commanding obedience, and the penalty threatening death in case of disobedience ; and Christ fulfilled them both ; therein his righteousness was complete and perfect, just such as the law called for. 'Tis intimated

2. That this obedience which Christ performed to the law, was in the room and stead of his people. He owed it not upon his own account, and needed not to have put himself into any state of subjection to the law, in which it was necessary for him to pay it ; is therefore to be consider'd in the whole of that obedience which he performed to the law, as acting in the room and stead of his people. Hence he is represented, as *made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under it ; and said, to give his life a ransom for many, and to bear our sins in his body on the tree ; to make his soul an offering for sin ; to die for the ungodly, and for his sheep ; and to suffer once for sin, the just for the unjust.* No words can more plainly and fully express, that, in all Christ did and suffered, he acted as the surety and substitute of his people, and that he might make satisfaction to divine justice in their room and stead : We can't deny this without offering violence to the plainest words of scripture ;
and

and if we are not to understand passages so express, and so numerous in the literal and obvious sense of the words, I shall for ever despair of knowing the sense of scripture upon any one article. What has been suggested concerning the perfection of Christ's obedience and satisfaction, and that it was performed to the law on the behalf and in the room of his people, might be largely established ; but as it will unavoidably fall in my way to represent these things again, I shall for the present pass them by ; and go on to observe

3. And lastly, That from that perfect and complete obedience, which Christ thus performed to the law in the room and stead of his people, results that righteousness in and for which we are justified. Such obedience has in it the formal nature of righteousness, and is that righteousness, which the gospel provides and accepts for a sinner's justification. The Church in our text as such applies to it, and rejoices in it. 'Tis mentioned as Christ's dearest and most honourable name, *the Lord our righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 6. The prophet *Daniel* describes him as *bringing in everlasting righteousness, so finishing transgression, and making an end of sin*, as to all its guilt and power for condemnation, Dan. ix 24. And that this righteousness is made ours for justification, the Apostle plainly asserts, when, in opposition to our condemnation by the sin and disobedience of the first *Adam*, he represents the way and manner of our justification

tion by the obedience and righteousness of Christ, Rom. v. 18, 19. *Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation: even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.* And he is said, *to be made of God unto us righteousness*, 1 Cor. i. 30. And *is the end of the law for righteousness*, Rom. x. 4. And *God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. Each of these texts might be largely pleaded and vindicated in support of this truth; and taking them all together what a full, what an united, testimony are they to this great article of our faith, that we have in Christ a full and complete righteousness for our justification, when we have it not in ourselves, nor can have it elsewhere?

And this an eminent writer gives as the plain and obvious sense of that text, about which our commentators are so much divided, John i. 16. *And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.* “ That is, that as it pleased
 “ *the Father, that in Christ all fullness should*
 “ *dwell*, Col. i. 19. *So it was his pleasure, that*
 “ *from that fullness there should be derived to*
 “ *all believers grace answerable to the grace*
 “ *that is in Christ Jesus, and that every grace*
 “ *that is in Christ, shall be reckoned to be*
 “ *ours,*

“ *ours*, and esteemed as such. For the pro-
 “ position *עַלֵּי* which is here translated *for*,
 “ is a word of *imputation*, and of *commuta-*
 “ *tion*. It is used in the sacred writings, and
 “ and in other good authors, when one is
 “ reckoned in the place of another, and one
 “ thing is substituted and changed for another.
 “ *Give unto them the tribute money, for me*
 “ *and thee*, Matt. xvii. 27. that is, in thine
 “ and my stead. For one morsel of meat *he*
 “ *sold his birth-right*, Heb. xii. 16. that is, he
 “ changed his birth-right for it. From which
 “ acceptance of the word we learn how to
 “ understand and apply it in the text before
 “ us, when 'tis said, that of Christ's fulness we
 “ receive grace for grace, the genuine sense is,
 “ that every grace in Christ is made over to
 “ us, and is reckoned as ours. There is a
 “ change made between him and all true be-
 “ lievers. As he takes upon him their sins,
 “ so his righteousness is imputed to them. This
 “ is fitly expressed by the preposition *עַלֵּי* for;
 “ and *to receive grace for grace*, is as if it
 “ had been said, all that grace and righteouf-
 “ ness, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, is
 “ transferred to us by God and accepted as
 “ our own, when he justifies us.”* This a
 learned man, and who has deserved well of
 the Church by his many writings in defence of
 the doctrines of the Reformation, offers as what
 seemed to him to be the genuine import of
 these

* Dr Edwards's Doct. of faith, p. 297.

these words. I would only crave leave to add, that possibly we may, with a small alteration, express the sense of them in a somewhat more easy and natural manner thus; that of that *fulness* of merit and righteousness, which is in Christ, believers *receive grace for grace*, that is, *grace* for the free and *gratuitous* remission of their sins, and their justification and acceptance unto life. The same with what the Apostle has told us, Rom. iii. 24. that *we are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*; and Rom. v. 21. that *grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord*.

From what hath been said, I hope, it sufficiently appears, what that righteousness is, which we have in Christ for our justification.

'Tis not his essential righteousness as God *. He will not give the glory of this righteousness to another, nor, indeed, can he vest the sinner with it, but man will thereby be made God. Besides, the righteousness, by which we are justified, must be a righteousness that is wrought out in conformity to the law, that is the rule and standard of it; and tho' 'tis most certain, that the essential righteousness of Christ as God carries in it a full and everlasting conformity to the law, yet the essential righteousness of

F God

* This was the opinion of *Oslander* a learned man, who appeared in *Germany* in the beginning of the Reformation. He gave *Luther* and *Melanchton* a great deal of trouble with his notions. Vid. *Sleid. Comment. de Statu relig. Lib. 22.*

God is not to be adjusted and modelled by the law, but rather the law must be adjusted and modelled by that: The law is a transcript of the divine rectitude, not the divine rectitude a transcript of the law. Finally, this righteousness can in no sense be transferred to us; 'tis eternally inherent in God, and his other perfections of wisdom, power, goodness, and the like, may as well be transferred to us as his righteousness.

But the righteousness, which we have in Christ for our justification, is the righteousness which was wrought out by him as God-man mediator; his mediatorial or suretyship righteousness, consisting in that perfect obedience which he performed to the law in the room and stead of his people; in his active obedience doing all that the law required to be done; in his passive obedience suffering all that the law threatened to inflict; in both fulfilling and perfecting that righteousness, which answers to the law in its utmost extent, and which we may plead and trust in for our justification.

Let this then stand as the result of the whole debate, that 'tis only the righteousness of Christ, that righteousness which he wrought out in the perfect obedience which he performed to the law in the room and stead of his people, and as their surety, which is the righteousness in and for which sinners are justified.

What then remains, but that we own before God the insufficiency of our own, and of every other righteousness for our justification,
and

and with humble joyful faith accept of that better and superior righteousness, which is provided in Christ for this purpose? And were our minds filled with a due sense of that authority of God which is impress'd upon the law, of that holiness which breathes thro' it, and of that awful justice which is the great guardian of its honour, how would this shew us in the strongest light the necessity of this righteousness, and teach us to bless God for it? withdraw our dependence from every other righteousness, and engage us in the way of the gospel to seek after an interest in this? That, in the language of the Apostle, Phil. iii. 9. *We may be found in him, not having our own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.* Where, but in the Lord Jesus Christ alone, is that righteousness to be had, that fully answers to the purity and perfection of the law, and in which the law and the law-giver can with so much honour acquiesce?

S E R M O N III.

ISAIAH xlv. former part of the 24th
verse.

*Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have
I righteousness.*

WE have hitherto been stating and explaining the nature of that righteousness, which we have in the Lord Jesus Christ for our justification. Righteousness in the general nature of it speaks a conformity to some law, which is consider'd as the measure and standard of it. The law in the present case is the pure and perfect law of God, the moral law ; a law that calls for perfect and sinless obedience as the necessary condition of our acceptance with God, and that threatens death in case of the failure of such obedience. This law we having broken by sin, and being no ways able either to fulfil the obedience it requires, or to sustain the punishment it inflicts ; nor any creature sufficient to go thro' either of these for us, Christ hath been appointed and substituted to perform the one, and suffer the other
in

in our room and stead ; and this he hath accomplished in the most perfect manner ; in the obedience of his life doing all that the law required to be done, and in the sufferings of his death submitting to all that the law threatned to inflict ; in both *fulfilling all righteousness*, and *bringing in everlasting righteousness*. And as Christ, in all he thus did and suffer'd, sustained the character of the Mediator and Surety of his people, this is, what has been commonly and properly called, his mediatorial or suretyship righteousness ; and is that alone righteousness which sinners have to plead, and in which they may trust for their justification in the sight of God. This is the sum of what has been at large consider'd and represented upon this head. I now proceed,

Secondly, To shew how we come to have an interest in this righteousness ; how this righteousness, which is originally and subjectively without us, comes to be made ours, and we to have an interest in it, so that we may say in the stile of the text, *in the Lord have I righteousness*. To which I answer in general, that this is done by *Imputation*. God mercifully and graciously imputes and reckons it to the soul in believing, and so we come according to the tenor and constitution of the new covenant to have a real and pleadable interest in it. Not that he reckons we wrought it out in our own persons, so that the individual obedience and sufferings of Christ are judged to be our obedience and

sufferings, this destroys the imputation of that which is done by another for us, and is not according to the judgment of truth; nor that he takes it from Christ, and transfuses it into us, so that we become the seat and subject of it by way of inherency, and this righteousness an inherent quality in us, that is impossible in the nature of things: But the meaning is, that he graciously accepts it for our pardon and justification, as if we had personally wrought it out our selves; and as it was performed in our room and stead, by a proper substitution of Christ to bear the guilt and punishment of our sins, as such he considers it in his law, and deals with us accordingly, and all the benefit and advantage of it by the constitution of the new covenant redound unto us.

This is what we mean by *Imputation*, and such in general is the way in which we come to have an interest in this righteousness. And in this very sense, or in a sense that has a near relation to it, we find the word used in scripture. It was expressly required under the law, that all sacrifices should be offered up to God at the tabernacle, and no where else, *Levit. xvii. 4.* God had wise ends in such a prohibition, partly that he might create a greater veneration for publick worship, and partly that he might the more effectually restrain the people from idolatry, to which the sacrificing in private might give too great occasion. Now, if any person, in contempt of such express prohibition, should
dare

dare to perform this part of worship in private, or at any other place, 'tis said, *blood shall be imputed to that man, he hath shed blood*; not that it was supposed, that the person that did this was actually guilty of murder, but he should be looked upon in the eye of the law, and under that constitution, as tho' he had murder'd a man, and be treated accordingly. So *Shimei* pleaded with *David*, when he knew how justly he had exposed himself by his base conduct to his resentment, *Let not my Lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely.* 2 Sam. xix. 19. He owns the fact, but pleads that it might not be charged upon him, so as to bring him under the sentence he had reason to fear.

But what comes nearer our purpose, is, what the Apostle says to *Philemon* in relation to his servant *Onesimus*, who is supposed to have wronged him, *Epist. to Phil.* ver. 18, 19. *If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account (ἐμοὶ ἐλλόγει) I Paul have written it with my own hand, I will repay it.* Where the Apostle makes himself chargeable with *Onesimus's* debt, and engages to his master, that whatever he had wrong'd him in, or might owe him, he would be responsible for it. And 'tis worth observing, that the word which the Apostle uses, when he thus charges himself on *Onesimus's* account, is the same that he uses when stating the way and manner of our

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justification,

justification*. The Psalmist describes the blessed man in this, *that God doth not impute iniquity to him*, Psal. xxxii. 2. Which the Apostle more fully explains by God's imputing righteousness to him, *Rom. iv. 6. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works*; imputeth a righteousness for his justification without any works of his own. And shewing, onwards in that chapter, from the way and manner of *Abraham's* justification, how this blessing was extended to the *Gentiles*, he tells us, *that he was the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed to them also*, ver. 11. and that it was not written for his sake alone that that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed if we believe, ver. 23, 24. So we read, *that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them*, 2 Cor. v. 19. that is, not charging, nor punishing the guilt of sin upon the sinner, as he might in justice have done. And Christ is said to be made of God unto us righteousness, 1 Cor. i. 30. which must necessarily

* λογίζεσθαι signifies to reckon or account, and with a dative case, to put to any one's account. *Locke* on *Rom. ch. iv. ver. 8.* and a learned man has observed, that this word is used ten times in that chapter; his words are, "Vox Græca respondens imputationi non paucius quam decies reperitur in uno capite, *Rom. iv.* ea autem est λογίζομαι vel ejusdem familiaris ἐλλογῆμαι; qua quidem ad imputationem notandam aptiorem mihi fateor minime succurrere." *Tull. justif. Paul. p. 81.*

farly signify, that the righteousness of Christ is set down to our account, or reckoned and imputed to us for our justification, it being mentioned as a distinct blessing from the righteousness of *sanctification*, which is inherent in the Christian. And, once more, in the strong expression of the Apostle, 2 Cor. v. 21. Christ is said, *to be made sin for us, when he knew no sin ; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* In the same way and manner in which *Christ was made sin for us, we are made the righteousness of God in him ;* the one could be only by imputation, therefore, so must the other. So little reason is there to except, as some have done, against the phrase of being justified by an imputed righteousness, or by the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, when in some places we have the expression itself of *God's imputing righteousness* in so many syllables, in others the full sense and meaning of it, and sometimes those expressions are used that are, if possible, more strong and forcible.

But still the enquiry returns; what foundation is there for such imputation, and how is it consistently with the truth of things, that that righteousness, which is wholly inherent in, and wrought out by another, can by such imputation be made ours? Can be imputed of God for our justification, and we be considered as having an interest in it? This is a question of principal importance in the gospel scheme of
justification ;

justification ; and in answer to it, I desire the following things may be considered,

I. That this righteousness was wrought out by the appointment of God, and in consequence of solemn covenant transactions from eternity between the Father and Son.

II. That Christ in the fullness of time assumed our nature with this very view, that he might be in a capacity to work out this righteousness.

III. That appearing in our nature to work out this righteousness, he acted in all he did and suffer'd not only in the common nature, but in the common name of his people ; by which I mean, that he did what he did, and suffer'd what he suffer'd, not only for their benefit, but strictly and properly in their room and stead.

IV. That the Father hath declared his acceptance and approbation of this righteousness, as so wrought out, for all the purposes for which it was intended.

V. That upon our union to Christ by faith, we come to have an actual and pleadable interest in it.

VI. The believing soul being thus interested in this righteousness, henceforth is esteemed perfectly righteous in the sight of God.

VII. That the righteousness of Christ being thus made a believer's to his actual and personal justification, none of the parties concerned have any reason to complain ; but 'tis to the satisfaction,

faction, and with the full consent of them all.
And then I might add,

VIII. And lastly, That the righteousness of Christ being after this manner, and in this way made over to the believer, it does, and ever will, continue his justifying righteousness ; God will for ever own it as such, nor shall any enemy dispossess him of it.

These several things will, I apprehend, place this great article of gospel truth in a clear and easy light, and taking the whole scheme thus together in one view, I hope, it will appear every way consistent with itself, and not so open to objections, as some have imagined.

I. This righteousness was wrought out by the appointment of God, and in consequence of solemn covenant transactions from eternity, between the Father and Son. Our redemption and salvation by Christ was not a work of yesterday : It had its rise in the bosom of God before all worlds, and according to the model which was then pitched upon, the whole was conducted, and executed.

From an unconceivable eternity God saw us, no sooner formed by his power and goodness, but drawn into a sad apostacy from him, and so sunk into the depths of guilt and misery. Upon this view of our case, free and sovereign grace interposed, formed a most blessed design about our recovery, and settled an everlasting covenant about the way and manner in which
it

it was to be effected. 'Tis true, how this covenant was managed, in the settlement and various articles of it, from eternity between the Father and the Son, then assuming, and acting in, the character of the Mediator and surety of his people, *is a knowledge too wonderful for us*, and all our expressions are low and poor when we come to speak of it. But 'tis abundantly plain from the scriptures, that there was such a covenant, and that this covenant is the foundation of all the subsequent acts and blessings of divine grace. We read, *that the counsel of peace shall be between them both*, Zech. vi. 13. * That is, between the Father, *the Lord of hosts*, as he is called in the verse before, and *the man whose name is the branch*. And
we

* Some have thought it a considerable difficulty in the way of understanding this passage of the eternal covenant between the Father and Son, that 'tis expressed in the future tense, *the counsel — shall be*. But this difficulty will easily be removed, when we consider how frequent such an enallage of tenses is in the Hebrew language. A plain instance of which we have Psal. xvii. 3. *thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing*; where *shalt find* is in the future tense, tho' plainly referring to what was past; and ver. 9, 11, 14. supply us with more instances of the same sort. Nor is it unusual in scripture or other writings, to speak of a thing *as to be done*, when only some eminent manifestation of it is intended; and so *the counsel of peace shall be*, will signify no more, than that it shall appear and be evidenced to be. And what a signal manifestation of such counsel and covenant between the Father and Son, were the great things that are spoken of in that verse, such as *building the temple of the Lord, and bearing the glory, and sitting and ruling upon his throne, and being a priest upon this throne*? Vid. Wits. Oeconom. Lib. 2. Cap. 2. §. 7, 8. where that excellent writer hath, with great learning and judgment, vindicated the application of this passage to the eternal covenant we are speaking of.

we are said to be redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot : who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, or appointed before all worlds in the counsels of the Father to the great work of redeeming and saving sinners by his death. 1 Pet. i. 19, 20. And so Christ, the eternal and essential wisdom of the Father, is brought in speaking of himself, Prov. viii. 22, — 25, 30, 31. *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth. — Then was I by him, as one brought up with him : and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him : Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men :* Which last clause necessarily obliges us to understand the whole passage of Christ's being set up from everlasting, as the head of the redeemed world, and of his rejoicing in the fore-view of his accomplishing the great work, which, under that character, was committed to him ; as 'twas upon the prospect of this that the Father and Son mutually delighted in each other, and would delight to dwell with men.

In other passages, we have all the essentials of a covenant : We find the Father proposing
man's

man's recovery, and the Son undertaking it; What else can be the meaning of that expression, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God*, Heb. x. 7. ? * And that *will of God* which Christ undertook, and came so readily to do, the Apostle explains in the 10th verse, to be that great article and appointment of the will of God, which related to the expiating the guilt of sin, and saving sinners by his death.

Yet more particularly; we find the Father making all suitable promises to the Son according to the nature of the work which he was to undertake; as of assistance; *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee*, Isa. xlii. 6. *With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall rule for him*, Psal. lxxxix. 21. Of acceptance; *Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped*

* “ Therefore I, that is Christ, come (according to what he had undertaken and bound himself by bond to his Father, in order to that great work of our redemption) to perform whatsoever thou my God shalt require of me.” *Hamm. Paraph.* And the same learned writer thinks that this is the true reason, why what Christ came to do in the work of redemption is said to be wrote in the *roll or volume of the book*, Psal. xl. 7. His words are too remarkable, not to be transcrib'd. “ The roll of the book, (as it belongs to Christ) is no more but a *bill or roll of contract* betwixt the Father and him, wherein is supposed to be written the agreement preparatory to that great work of Christ's incarnation, wherein he undertaking perfectly to fulfil the will of God, to perform all active, and also passive obedience, even to death, had the promise from God, that he should become the *author of eternal salvation to all those that obey him.*” *Dr Hammond in loc.*

helped thee: — That thou mayest say to the prisoners go forth; to them that are in darkness shew yourselves, Isa. xlix. 8, 9. Of success; When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his day, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied, Isa. liii. 10, 11. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession, Psal. ii. 8. And of honour, and glory; Also I will make him my first born, higher than the kings of the earth, — his seed also will I make to endure for ever: and his throne as the days of heaven, Psal. lxxxix. 27, 29. His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed, Psal. lxxii. 17. And the Son accepting these promises; believing in them, and depending upon them, For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me? — Behold the Lord God will help me, who is he that shall condemn me? — Isa. 1. 7, — 9. In view of them stipulating ready obedience, and reluctant none of the difficulties of the work that lay before him; The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them

*them that plucked off the hair : I hid not my face from shame and spitting, Isa. l. 5, 6. And upon the close of his work, pleading them with him, and referring the issue of his whole undertaking to him; Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain, yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.— Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength, Isa. xlix. 4, 5. Where Christ is introduced, as it were, remonstrating to the Father, that the calling and conversion of the Jews, especially as so small a number of them should be brought to believe in him, would be “ too light a recompence for so great labour !” Upon which the Father is represented as enlarging his grant, and constituting him the Saviour both of Jews and Gentiles; And he said, it is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth, ver. 6. ** And what is this but exactly according to the promise mentioned before, *ask of me and I shall give the heathen for thine inheritance, &c?*

Finally, To give the greater solemnity to this covenant, we find God confirming it by an

* See the whole passage explained to this purpose, *Charnock*. Vol. II. p. 271.

an oath, and swearing to his Son that he would punctually fulfil the several articles of it. *Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lye unto David, that is, to the Messiah of whom David was a type. His [Messiah's] seed shall endure for ever, and his [Messiah's] throne, as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah. Psal. lxxxix. 35, — 37.* I can't but conceive, that the Psalmist in a great part of this psalm had a direct reference to the Messiah; for tho' there are some things, that are personal and peculiar to *David* himself, yet there are others, that are too grand and magnificent to be understood of him any otherwise, than as he was a type of the Messiah. Such are what is said of him, and promised to him, ver. 19, — 29. where are plain representations of the several parts of this covenant, in the very strain that I have already taken notice of. And what follows from the 30th to the 34th verse, seems to be spoken by the inspired writer under the same view. *If his [Messiah's] children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgment; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments: Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him [Messiah,] nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.* Promises that contain the fullest as-

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surances,

surances, that however God might for wise and holy reasons correct his people, the children of *Messiah*, for their sins, yet the covenant made with Him, and with them in him, should for ever remain inviolable; and for this we have the oath of God.

Such plain and evident indications we have of covenant-transactions between the Father and Son, concerning the way and method of our redemption; and I have been the more particular in tracing out the nature and terms of this covenant, because it was the warrant, which Christ went upon in all he did and suffered as mediator, for *he gave himself for our sins, according to the will of God*, Gal. i. 4. And because it is upon the foot of such covenant and according to the plan and model therein settled, that all the blessings of grace are dispensed. Hence *eternal life* is said to be *promised*, and *grace to be given in Christ Jesus, before the world began*, Tit. i. 2. 2 Tim. i. 9. It cannot be understood of any promise made, or grace given to us in our own persons, for none did then exist, to whom such promise might be made, and on whom such gift might terminate; must therefore be understood of the promise made, and grace given before all worlds in Christ as the head of the covenant, and surety of his people, then acting in their names, and transacting with the Father for them.

What I mean upon the whole is, that that righteousness, which is the completion of what
Christ

Christ did and suffer'd as mediator, was wrought out not only by the appointment of God, but in pursuit of a solemn covenant agreement between the Father and Christ, which, as it is the great thing that regulates his mediatorial undertakings, must lay a direct foundation for the imputation of such righteousness in the way, and for the purposes for which it was designed, and agreed.

II. This righteousness was wrought out in the same nature that fell, and stood in need of it; and this gives a yet nearer relation to, and claim in it. And, indeed, this was the very end, for which Christ in the fullness of time assumed our nature, *viz.* that he might be in a capacity to work out this righteousness. As the Apostle observes, Gal. iv. 4, 5. that *when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons* *. The incar-

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nate

* Sponsori nostro id incumberebat præstandum quod lex à nobis exigit, ut *δικαιώματα* illius impleatur. Rom. viii. 4. Nosque juxta antiquam conventionem servemur. Legi autem hominibus latæ nisi per hominem satisfieri non potest: neque quoad præcepta, quæ Spiritum & animam & corpus sancta servari ac Deo impendi postulant, neque quoad *comminationes*, quibus & corpori & animæ sua mors indicitur. Unde necesse est, sponso-rem nostrum vere hominem esse, ut corpore atque anima omnem justitiam impleat, Mat. iii. 15. Et utriusque morte subita, suos à morte vindicet, Heb. ii. 14. Hinc est quod Apostolus individuo nexu hæc duo copulet, *Factus ex muliere, & factus*
sub

nate Son of God, God in our natures, appears in the fulness of time to work out that righteousness which we wanted, and to redeem from that curse and condemnation of the law under which we were fallen. Christ, considered merely as God, could neither have obey'd, nor suffer'd; but having assumed the nature of man into so near a union to his own divine person, he comes into a capacity for both. This made him a member of our world, and one of us: and thus in that nature in which the law was broken, the law is fulfilled; in that nature which had lost all righteousness, all righteousness is recovered; and, finally, in that nature, which was become obnoxious to death, death is suffer'd and triumph'd over. As the Apostle under this view fixes our eye upon him, Heb. ii. 14, 15. *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same: that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage.*

The carrying on the work of redemption and salvation, by the obedience and sufferings of Christ in our nature, had a twofold effect, both of which are of the nearest concernment to us. The one is, the recovering the honour of

sub lege, Gal. iv. 4. Indicans proximum incarnationis Christi finem esse, ut in natura sua humana illi subjiciatur legi, quæ homini primum lata est. *Wüs.* in Symbol. Exercitat. 14. Sect. 30, 31.

of the law, which we had violated, for thus, as was just now observed, the law is fulfilled and honoured in the same nature, to which it was given, and by which it was broken : The other, the opening out a way in which all the advantages of Christ's mediation might be assured, and convey'd to us. He is now bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh ; our *goel* and near kinsman, and so the equity of redemption is devolved upon him. As under the law, if an inheritance was mortgaged or sold, the nearest akin to the person, who had mortgag'd or sold it, had the equity of redemption in him. See *Lev.* xxv. 24, 48, 49. *Ruth* iv. 4. Thus is Christ in his incarnation become our kinsman, one nearly ally'd to us, that he might be in a capacity to redeem and save us. As the women reason'd with *Naomi*, *Ruth* iv. 14, 15. And so may I, O believer ! apply myself to thee ; *Thou art not left this day without a kinsman, and he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life.* Wherefore does he wear thy nature, but that he might suffer and satisfy for thy sins ? The human nature that suffers, the divine nature that sanctifies and ennobles the sufferings of the humanity, and gives them an efficacy for that redemption which was to be effected by them. Hence 'tis, that Christ is prophetically brought in by the Psalmist, expressing himself with a holy joy upon his having a body prepared him, in which he might offer that sacrifice for the atonement of sin, for which all the

sacrifices under the law had been found weak and ineffectual, *Psal.* xl. 6. *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened*, or as the margin reads it, *digged* *. So
our

* Almost all our commentators seem to be agreed, that the Psalmist in this passage had his eye upon the custom, that was directed under the Jewish law, concerning menial servants having their *ear bored* in token of perpetual servitude, when they did not chuse to go out free at the end of seven years service, *Exod.* xxi. 6. *Deut.* xv. 17. And then they account for the Apostle's rendring the passage so differently, in the quotation he gives of it, *Heb.* x. 5. by supposing that he followed the LXX, where it stands exactly as he hath given it. Dr *Owen* rather thinks, that some, that had a value for that translation, and a mind to give it a greater sanction, some way or other foisted the Apostle's words into it. Mr *Pierce* has a long note upon the passage, as quoted by the Apostle, in which he accounts for the Apostle's rendring it by supposing a corruption in the *Hebrew* text, as it stands in our present copies: but that is taking a liberty with the sacred text, that I know not that we have any sufficient warrant for. Another learned writer, who seems to make no doubt of the Apostles following the *Septuagint* in this quotation, gives a reason why the authors of that version have thus rendered this passage of the Psalmist: He supposes that these interpreters fearing lest such a servile mark should be thought too derogatory to the *Messiah*, have rendered it, *a body hast thou prepared me*, or *adapted for me*, which in the main comes near the same sense, and only softens very much the expression. But those, that know any thing of the genius and manner of those interpreters, will not so easily give into such a supposition. But upon the foot of that turn which I have given the words, there is no need of any of these suppositions; and both the LXX and the Apostle appear justly to have rendered them: *A body hast thou prepared me*; or, *thou hast formed me an organized body*. "Framing of ears was a part of framing the body, and so synechdochically the same." This easy turn of the words gives the full and direct meaning of the Psalmist, preserves the propriety and force of the expressions, fairly accounts for the Apostle's rendring them without copying after any translation whatever, and makes what is said of Christ, and the particle γ that introduces it, exactly redditive to what had been said concerning the insufficiency

our Translators have rendered it, in a manifest allusion to the custom under the law of a servant's having his ear bored through with an aul at the door of his master's house, in token that he should serve him for ever, when he did not choose to go out free at the seventh year. But I rather think, that it ought to be rendered, *mine ears hast thou hollowed*, or fashioned, expressing the way and manner, in which that curious organ of the body is framed : and so by an easy and common figure of a part for the whole, by Christ's having his ear *hollowed* or framed, we are to understand his having a proper human body given him, in which he might offer up that sacrifice for the expiation of sin, which was so much wanted, and of which all the sacrifices of the Jewish law were but mere figures. And the formation of the *ears* is mentioned, rather than of any other part of the body, as the design of the Psalmist was prophetically to express the Messiah's fitness and readiness to receive and execute the divine commands relating to the *will of God*, *which he came to do* in consequence of his incarnation.

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nation.

cy of all Jewish sacrifices. And so the whole passage appears easy and beautiful, and the quotation of it, as given by the Apostle, exactly consistent with the original text, as it stands in the Psalms. I might add, that כרה, which is the word used by the Psalmist, signifies not only to *dig* or *bore*, but more generally to *adapt*, *fit*, or *make ready*; some instances of which we have in *Buxtorf* under the word כרה; nor is it the word that is used, either in *Exodus* or *Deuteronomy*, for *boring* the ear : which seems to give great countenance to the interpretation I have been pleading for. *Vid. Script. Authent. and Faith Certain* by the Bishop of *Cork* and *Ross*, p. 40, 41.

nation. And so the Apostle renders it, and fixes this as the true sense of the Psalmist, when he quotes the passage, *Heb. x. 5. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me*; That is, a body in which to do the will of God by offering up a perfect sacrifice for sin; as it follows, *ver. 10. by the which will we are sanctified*; That is, in the language of this epistle, cleansed from the guilt of sin, *by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*. And thus, as the Apostle observes *chap. ii. 11. both he which sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified*, he who maketh expiation for sin, and they whose sins are expiated, *are all of one*, have communion in one and the same nature: *for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren*. As he instances to this purpose, in the 16th verse, that he assumed our nature exclusively of the nature of Angels, as he never was designed to be the Saviour of fallen Angels, *for verily he took not on him the nature of Angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham*. And intimates, in the next verse, the fitness and condecency of his being *made in all things like unto his brethren*, that he might be in a capacity to sustain that office in the execution of which *he might make reconciliation for the sins of the people*. And how does the first discovery, which we have of Christ in our Bibles, exhibit him in the same view, the *seed of the woman*, and possessing the
same

same nature with us, that he might effect redemption and deliverance for us, *Gen. iii. 15?* And accordingly *the word was made flesh*, *Joh. i. 14.* And *God sent forth his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh*, *Rom. viii. 3.* And he is said, *to bare our sins in his own body on the tree*, *1 Pet. ii. 24.* And this is so essential to all our hopes in him, that the Apostle *John* speaks of those that deny it as subverting the whole Gospel, *1 Joh. iv. 3.* 2d Epist. ver. 7. We cannot, indeed, but observe that all along the greatest stress is laid upon this, that our nature, that nature that had sinned in us, obeyed and died, suffered and satisfied in Christ; nor would it have availed us, that another should suffer for us, if he had not been one of us.

The sum of what hath been said is this: That the righteousness, which we have in Christ for our justification, is not a righteousness that was wrought out in a nature that was a stranger to us, and to which we were no ways allied; but in our nature, and in our nature assumed for this purpose, that such righteousness might be wrought out in it. And this gives us a yet nearer claim in it, and lays a more direct foundation for it's being imputed to us, or made ours in the way, and for the purposes that God hath appointed. O! *How great is this mystery of godliness, that God was manifest in the flesh!* *1 Tim. iii. 16.* For the eternal Son of God to veil his glories in the infirmities of our flesh, how astonishing this grace!

grace! And how supporting to faith, to see in him that righteousness, for us and in our natures, that we wanted in our persons!

What has been now said of the reason of Christ's assuming our nature fully removes an objection, that has been often made, against his active obedience being considered as a part of that righteousness by which we are justified, as being owing upon it's own account. For however the human nature of Christ being a creature was necessarily subject to the law, yet, as the reason why he assumed that nature was, that he might be in a capacity to do and suffer all that was necessary for our redemption and salvation, I cannot see, why his active obedience may not be considered as contributing it's proper share to the main design. If he assumed the human nature for us, what should hinder, but that all the obedience, which he performed in that nature, should be reckoned to us? And thus, *as by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead; and, as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, the second man, the second Adam, shall many be made righteous.*

III. Christ appearing in our natures to work out this righteousness, he acted not only in the common nature, but in the common name of his people: By which I mean, that, he did what he did, and suffered what he suffered,
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not only for their benefit and advantage, but strictly and properly in their room and stead.

The whole weight of our controversy with the *Socinians*, upon the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction, hinges here: They will readily grant, that what Christ did in his sufferings and death was for our good, for our benefit and advantage, and that the effects thereof might some way or other extend to us. But I think we are able to prove with the clearest evidence out of the scriptures, that his obedience and sufferings were not only for our good, but strictly and properly on our behalf, and in our room and stead; that he died not only as a martyr, to bear witness to the truth, and confirm the doctrine which he preached; nor only as an example of that resignation and submission, which we owe to the will of God, under the heaviest and most unmerited sufferings; but as a sacrifice and substitute, charged with our guilt, and bearing that punishment, which was due to our sins, that so he might make full and proper satisfaction to the justice of God for them. And, indeed, to make Christ only a martyr, is, to place his death upon a level with that of others in that noble army, who have sealed the testimony of Jesus with their warmest blood; and in this view of the death of Christ, there would be nothing to distinguish it from that of a *Cranmer*, and a *Latimer*. And, to make it only an example, is still placing it upon the same low foot. Take,
my

my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, Jam. v. 10, 11. But surely Christ died for us, and to effect our salvation, in a way, that none else ever did, or ever can. He died under the heavy load of our guilt, and was offered to bear the sins of many, Heb. ix. 28. And himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree, 1 Pet. ii. 24. And is the Lamb of God, that taketh away sin, Joh. i. 29. And suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, 1 Pet. iii. 18. — Hence he is said, to be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him: And the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all, made all that guilt, which we had contracted, by a legal charge to meet on him; and in consequence of this, it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and to put him to grief: And he made his soul an offering for sin, poured out his soul to death, and bare the sin of many, Isa. liii. 5, 6, 12. And God did not spare his own Son, Rom. viii. 32. Passages that plainly imply that Christ was substituted in his death to bear the guilt and punishment of sin, and that he might make satisfaction to the justice of God for it. — Of the like import are those expressions, that Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, 1 Cor. v. 7. That he gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, Eph.

Eph. v. 2. And gave his life a ransom * for many, Mat. xx. 28. And gave himself a ransom † for all, a vicarious price for their redemption and salvation, 1 Tim. ii. 6. And was a merciful, and faithful high priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation ‡ for the sins of the people, Heb. ii. 17. And, again, he shed his blood for many for the remission of sins, Mat. xxvi. 28. And for sin, that is, by a sacrifice for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, Rom. viii. 3. And once in the end of the world he appeared to put away sin || by the sacrifice of himself, Heb. ix. 26. — He is likewise said to be made a curse for us, bearing himself that curse, that penal vindictive wrath of God, which was due to us for sin, that he might redeem us from it; “all our debt was in the curse of the law which he wholly underwent,” ** Gal. iii. 13. And God is said to set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood; to declare his righteousness ††, the rectitude of his

* Λύτρον. † Ἀντὶλυτρον. ‡ Ἰλασκαριον.

|| Εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἀμαρτίας Ἀθέτησις, when applied to a law, signifies the abrogation of it; when applied to sin, signifies the cancelling all it's power for condemnation; or, as one has expressed it, “the wiping out the score, and reducing matters to that pass, that an action will no longer lie against us.”

** Dr Owen's Death of Death, p. 141.

†† So the word δικαιοσύνη properly signifies, and in this sense is frequently used, See 2 Thes. i. 5, 6. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Rev. xv. 5, 6, 7. and xix. 2. Grotius, to evade the force of this text, in favour of the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction, would have it translated *goodness*, or *bounty*: and in support of this, refers to several passages, where the word צדק or צדקה is so rendered

his nature, or his punitive justice, *for the remission of sins that are past; that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus*, Rom. iii. 25, 26. And, once more, in

rendered by the LXX; “ which as we deny not, says Dr Owen, “ that in some places, in the Old Testament, where it is used “ by the LXX, it doth, or may do so, so we say here, that “ sense can have no place, which no where is direct and proper: For the thing intended by it in that sense is expressed “ before in those words *σωπῆαν τῇ χερίτι αὐτῆς*, and is not “ consistent with that that follows, *εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν δίκαιον*, which represents God as he is *δίκαιος καὶ ἡμις*.” Owen’s Vindic. Evangel. p. 604.

Mr Locke has offered another exposition of these words, and by the *righteousness* here spoken of, understands the righteousness of God, in keeping his word with the nation of the Jews, notwithstanding their provocations; or, as he explains it more fully in his notes on ver. 5, to which he refers, God’s *faithfulness* in keeping his promise of saving believers, Gentiles as well as Jews, by righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ. But this seems to be as ill supported as that of *Grotius*. For I cannot find one single passage in the whole New Testament, where *δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ* is used in this sense. Most certainly it is used in a very different sense in this context, ver. 21, 23. and throughout this epistle, where it always signifies, either the righteousness by which we are justified, or that perfection of God which makes such righteousness necessary to our justification. In the former sense it is used, chap. ix. 30, 31. and chap. x. 4. And both these senses seem to have a place, chap. x. 3. where the word is used twice in one verse. And as to the sense, which it bears in the 5th verse of the third chapter, which is the only passage that Mr Locke refers to in support of his opinion, ’tis evidently to be understood there of the justice of God, that perfection which is manifested and displayed in punishing the sin and unrighteousness of men; the sense it likewise bears in the text under consideration. Not to add, that the Apostle speaks here of the *remission* of the sins of particular persons, even of all that died in faith under the dispensation of the Old Testament, and not of the remission of the sins of the Jews nationally considered, as Mr Locke is obliged to understand it consistently with his sense of the text. Compare Heb. ix. 15.

in the emphatical expreffion of the Apoftle, 2 Cor. v. 21. He is faid *to be made of God fin for us*, when in himfelf he knew no fin; not *made fin* by way of inherency, or by any infufion of the taint and pollution of fin, but by a legal imputation of it's guilt, our fins being charged upon him as our fubftitute, and under that view fatisfaction exacted of him, as if they had been his own. I know what the Socinian evasion is, that Chrift's being *made fin*, fignifies no more than his being reputed and efteemed a finner, and treated as fuch in the eye of the world. But furely nothing can be more empty and trifling than this; for befides the impropriety and abfurdity of this expofition of the phrafe, that *to be made fin by God* (for what is here faid of Chrift, is fpoken of as the act of God) fhould mean no more than being reputed a finner by man, the text itfelf, by ftating *fin* in oppofition to *righteoufnefs*, is it's own beft interpreter: After the fame way and manner, in which we *are made the righteoufnefs of God in him*, was he *made fin for us*: Our being made *the righteoufnefs of God* is not, as a learned writer notes *, that we are righteous in the opinion and efteem of the world, but that in a law fenfe we are conftituted and confidered as righteous in the fight of God; fo, therefore, his *being made fin*, is not that the world reputed him a finner, but that he was legally and judicially charged with

* Hoornb. Socin. confut. Tom. II. p. 563.

with our sins, and bore the full and proper punishment of them. And this is sometimes said to be *for many*, for *his church*, *his people*, *his sheep*, all that were given him of the Father in that eternal covenant and compact, which I mentioned before, in which the grand scheme of our redemption was adjusted through all the periods of it.

We cannot but observe, in the several passages that I have referred to, that those expressions are used and applied to the death of Christ, which import a real substitution, and by which the nature of piacular sacrifices was all along described. And, indeed, the strongest sacrificial phrases are used to set forth the nature and ends of the death of Christ; “ so
 “ that we must conclude that either his death
 “ was a propitiatory sacrifice, or else we must
 “ despair of finding out the meaning of any
 “ thing that can be expressed by words.” And a celebrated writer *, who seems to have examined this argument with a peculiar niceness and care, has observed, “ that the Apostles of
 “ the *New Testament* have not left one single
 “ phrase that belonged to sacrifices in the *Old*
 “ *Testament*, which they have not applied to
 “ the death of Christ in the *New*.” This argument would receive yet further force by considering,

* See this argument placed in a strong light, and pursued to a just length in Bishop Burnet's four discourses to his clergy: Of which what is said in his exposition of the articles seems to be but an abridgment.

considering, that, the sacrifices under the law, especially the expiatory ones, were but types and figures of the sacrifice of Christ; and that the several rites and usages that were appointed to be observed about them, still referred to something in him, in which they had their proper accomplishment *. I might add, what has been observed with great force, that as the Apostle used many of these sacrificial phrases in an epistle, that was purposely wrote to the *Jews* or *Hebrews*, to inform them of the true nature and design of the death of Christ, to whom such phrases were familiar, and their meaning well known, we cannot suppose but that he used these phrases in their common and proper sense; consequently, that Christ's death must be as true and real a sacrifice, as any under the law, as it was of dignity and efficacy superior to them all. Without supposing this, we must make the Apostle to be one of the most weak and absurd writers that ever was, or else that his design was not to instruct but to confound his readers.

And this accounts for all the weight and terribleness of Christ's sufferings, and for that astonishment of soul, that seized him at their approach. This made him so much deprecate the bitter cup, and pray with so much earnestness, that if it were possible it might pass from him; *and he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my father, if*

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* Vid. *Outram de Sacrific. Lib. 1. cap. 18. & passim.*

it be possible, let this cup pass from me, Mat. xxvi. 39. And the Apostle speaks of his offering up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, and of his being heard, in that he feared, Heb. v. 7. This made him in the garden, when preparing for his last sufferings by retirement and prayer, sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground, Luk. xxii. 44; and, when he saw the storm thickening, cry out, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, Mat. xxvi. 38. And when hanging upon the cross in yet greater distress, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me, Mat. xxvii. 46. Blessed Jesus! Thou hadst no sin of thine own for which to suffer and to answer, for surely the eternally beloved Son had never done any thing for which his Father's bowels should be estranged from him; and 'tis a thought infinitely unworthy of the Saviour, to suppose that he was filled with such horror and astonishment of soul, merely at the prospect of his undergoing a violent and bloody death, when so many of his followers have embraced a stake with joy, and with the greatest firmness of mind met death, when it has been clad with it's utmost terrors: But here, O most compassionate Saviour! is the miracle and mystery of thy death and love; when we see thee bleeding, 'tis for our sins; when we see thee groaning, 'tis under their weight; when we see thee crying out under the hidings of thy Father's face,

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'tis sin that has drawn the thick cloud between thee and him. This sharpened the arrow, that pierced the Redeemer's bosom, and mingled so much bitterness with his cup. The law found him in the sinner's place, and then *God spared not his own Son*: Justice found him charged with the sinner's guilt, and then it stirred up all it's wrath; *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man that is my fellow*: Nor did it withdraw it's terrors till he could say, *It is finished*; so he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost, Joh. xix. 30. Such plentiful evidence have we through the whole scripture, that what Christ did and suffered, was in the room and stead of his people, as charged with their guilt, and that he might make satisfaction to the justice of God for their sins.

And this fully removes an objection, that has been often made against the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction; that such sufferings could not be agreeable to the justice of God, which forbids us to suppose any person perfectly innocent capable of being punished. "We must be careful upon this occasion (to borrow the words of an eminent writer *) to remember

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* See Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's Lecture, Serm. V. second year, p. 19, 20. I have chosen to return an answer to this objection, in the words of a writer of principal note in the Established Church, not only, because it is just and solid, but because it expresses all that is intended by those phrases; *that Christ was the federal head and representative of his people; that he stood in their law place; and that there was, in the eye of the law, an exchange of persons between Christ and them; which* some

“ member the difference there is between the
 “ same person, when considered abstractedly
 “ or by himself, and when sustaining the
 “ character or representation of others: Since
 “ such a one’s innocence, though it render
 “ him incapable of punishment strictly so
 “ called in the former of these respects, yet
 “ hinders not at all why he may not be a
 “ just and proper object of it in the latter.
 “ The reason is, because then the law no lon-
 “ ger looks upon his private, but altogether
 “ upon his representative capacity; conse-
 “ quently, if they in whose place he stands
 “ be guilty, the recompence due to that guilt
 “ is now devolved upon their proxy.”

And, what a foundation does this lay for
 the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to us?
 He wrought it out under the character of the
 surety of his people; as their substitute, and
 strictly and properly in their room and stead.
 It was designed to be theirs, and, in the inten-
 tion of him that wrought it out, was wrought
 out with this view. We cannot tear this truth
 out of our bibles, without tearing them in
 pieces, and defacing the whole system of
 truths contained in them.

And now, that we have gone over the scrip-
 ture-proofs and evidences of this important
 truth, which we have found to be so express
 and

some have been so ready to except against; and upon the foot
 of such representation it is, that our best writers have defended
 the doctrine of Christ’s satisfaction against the *Socinians*.

and numerous, that 'tis hardly possible to deny the satisfaction of Christ, without shaking the credit and authority of revelation itself; let us pause a little and examine, what there is in this doctrine, that it should give such great offence to the world, and that such fresh clamours are daily raised against it. — Is it that God insists upon any satisfaction at all? But, is there then no regard due to the sacred rights of justice? Or is it any ways unbecoming the supreme and righteous Judge of the world, to express a concern for the honour of his own laws and government? If it was not unbecoming him to make laws for the government of his reasonable creature, can it be unbecoming him to see to the execution of those laws, and that the honour and authority of them be maintained and vindicated?

Is it, that the guilt of sin is transferred from the sinner, the original offender, to the surety, and that in consequence thereof an innocent person suffers? But how agreeable is this to the sentiments of all mankind, that in some cases and circumstances, and where a wise and good end may be answered thereby, that one person should bear the guilt and punishment of an other? And whence is it but from this principle that the practice of *vicarious* sacrifices has so universally obtained? And as for the sufferings of an innocent person; was not the glorious person in the case before us, one that was *sui juris*, absolute Lord of his own life,

who therefore had power to lay it down, and power to take it again, and this not only by grant from the Father as mediator, but independently and originally as being himself God in his higher and superior nature? And did he not lay it down by his own consent, and in consequence of obligations that he freely came under? And were not the ends that were proposed to be answered hereby the most valuable and important, the promoting the glory of God, and the effecting the salvation of sinners? And as he resigned his life by his own free consent, did he not take it again with circumstances of great honour in his resurrection, so rolling away all the reproach and shame of the cross, and asserting his own supreme power as Lord of life and death?

Or is it, that the glory of the divine perfections suffers, and is obscured by such satisfaction? But which, I pray, of the perfections of God is in danger of suffering by this scheme? Not his justice, all whose demands are answered to the full; not his holiness, for never was there so high and awful a display of God's most perfect holiness, and irreconcilable hatred of sin given to the world before, nor ever can be given again; not his truth and faithfulness, for rather than the threatening gone out against sin shall not be executed, it shall be executed upon the Son of God himself. But I suppose it will be said, that this doctrine leaves no possible room for the exercise of
 grace,

grace, for what room can there be for the exercise of grace, where full satisfaction is given? One cannot help thinking persons hard put to it to find an ill side to this doctrine, when they make this objection against it. For what can it be but an instance of the highest and most astonishing grace, for an offended God himself to provide and appoint one to make this satisfaction, and one that was of such dignity in himself, and so dear to the Father? And in consequence of this, to subject *him* to sufferings and death itself, and all this for the sake of guilty sinful man, and to open out a way for his redemption and pardon, consistently with the honour of God, when he might have exalted the glories of his law and justice in his everlasting destruction? The pardoning sin in such a way, and under such circumstances, is not only an act of grace, an act of pure and unmerited grace to the sinner, but even in itself an act of higher grace than if it had been pardoned by mere and absolute sovereignty, without any satisfaction at all. As the scripture in this places the emphasis of the love of God, 1 Joh. iv. 10. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* Joh. iii. 16. *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.* 'Tis, indeed, the peculiar glory of this doctrine, that it unites in the fullest

harmony all the honours of the highest justice, and of the richest grace; and shows God in one and the same view, the most awful and the most amiable Being, a strict Judge and a forgiving Father, a righteous Lawgiver and a merciful Sovereign, in the scripture-style, *a just God and a Saviour*.

Or, again, is it, that so glorious a person as the Son of God is substituted to make this satisfaction? And that in consequence of this the satisfaction given is so complete and full? But when the work was so important in itself, and the difficulties that attended it so great, can he be of too great dignity, who is appointed to undertake and accomplish it? The greater he is, the firmer foundation we shall have for our faith and hope in him; or can the satisfaction that is made to the law and justice of God be too complete and perfect? Besides, that “it were, as an excellent writer
 “ * has expressed it, manifestly more *honour-*
 “ *able*, and worthy of God, not to have ex-
 “ acted *any recompence at all*; than to have
 “ accepted, in the name of a sacrifice, *such as*
 “ *were unproportionable*, and *beneath the va-*
 “ *lue* of what was to be *remitted*, and *con-*
 “ *fer’d*. What had been lower must have been
 “ infinitely lower; let any thing be supposed
 “ *less than God*, and it falls *immensely* short of
 “ him. Such is the distance between *created*
 “ *being*, and *uncreated*, that the *former* is as
 “ *nothing*

“ *nothing* to the *latter* ; and therefore, bring
 “ the *honour*, and *majesty* of the *Deity* to any
 “ thing *less* than an *equal value*, and you bring
 “ it to *nothing*. And this had been quite to
 “ lose the design of insisting upon a recom-
 “ pence, it had been to make the Majesty of
 “ Heaven *cheap*, and depreciate the dignity
 “ of the divine government, instead of ren-
 “ dering it *august* and *great*.”

Or, once more, is it, that God does not accept of the sinner's repentance, the *best* as some have pleaded that he has, accept of that without looking farther? But what is there in the sinner's repentance, that is worthy of God's acceptance, considered as the supreme and righteous Governor of the world? What is the sinner's repentance, but an acknowledgment of his guilt, and demerit at the hands of an offended God, and a reproaching himself with his former madness and folly? And be it the best that the sinner has, what proportion is there in this to the evil of sin, as committed against God, and to the honour of his law and government, which have been insulted and invaded by him? Or can it be supposed in all cases, and under all circumstances, that it is fit, that the sinner should be pardoned upon his repentance alone, without farther recompence, or without ever suffering the legal punishment of his offence, notwithstanding his repentance? How were it possible upon this foot, to maintain the honour and authority of
 any

any government at all? As the fore-mentioned writer * remarks, “ How strange a *maxim* of government would that be: *That it is never fit an offender, of whatsoever kind, should be punish’d, if he repent himself of his offence!* and surely if ever, in any case, somewhat else *than repentance* be fitly insisted on, as a *recompence* for the violation of the *sacred rights of government*; it may well be supposed to be so, in the case of man’s common delinquency and revolt from God, much more.”

Or, finally, is it, that this doctrine has an unfriendly aspect upon the interests of holiness, and does, as some have charged it, sap the foundations of all morality? But what room can there possibly be for such a charge as this against a doctrine, that is apparently formed with every tendency, to fill us with the warmest sense of the love of God, at the same time that it gives us the most awful and affecting view of his justice and holiness? A doctrine that shows sin to be in the highest degree opposite to the righteous nature and holy will of God, nor points out any way for the pardon of it, but what will not suffer us to forget the dreadful wrath that is due unto it; in one word, a doctrine, that whilst it directs us to the fullest satisfaction in the death of Christ for the guilt of sin, impresses in the strongest manner the necessity of that faith, which

* *How*, Vol. I. p. 181.

which purifies the heart, and is the living and active principle of all holiness and obedience. If we thus examine the doctrine of satisfaction on every side, and in every view, it will appear worthy of God, and calculated to answer the noblest purposes, both with respect to the glory of God, and the interests of our faith, holiness, and comfort. And it will be then time enough to think of parting with this essential article of revealed religion, when those that have opposed it with so much bitterness have wrested our Bibles out of our hands, and substituted in the room of it a scheme of religion, that gives us nobler views of God, contains more powerful motives to holiness, and lays a firmer foundation for the pardon of sin, and the hopes of eternal life, which they never yet did, and I am fully persuaded never will, nor can. We are next to observe,

IV. That God the supreme Judge is fully satisfied with this righteousness, as a proper provision for his own honour, and accordingly hath declared his acceptance of it: And this lays a yet farther ground for the imputation of it to us. The honour of God is fully provided for in it, and he can now be *a just God and a Saviour; just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus*. There is no dispensing with the honour of the law, no receding from the sacred rights of justice. The righteousness which Christ fulfilled as the surety
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of his people, is just such, as the law and justice of God required it to be.

And accordingly God hath all manner of ways declared his acceptance of it. *Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour*, Eph. v. 2. God smelt, as is said of *Noah's sacrifice*, Gen. viii. 21. *a savour of rest* in the sacrifice of Christ. From an unconceivable eternity he was in this view the great object of the Father's delight; *Then was I by him, as one brought up with him: And I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him*. With what pleasure does he speak of him in prophecy long before his appearance; *Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth*, Isa. xlii. 1? When he was actually manifested to the world, and going forwards in his great work, with what solemnity does God proclaim, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*, Mat. iii. 17? And when he had payed down his life in an accursed death, which was all that the law could insist on, how does God himself knock off the fetters of the grave, throw open the prison door, and in his resurrection, give him a publick and solemn acquittance? As the Prophet observes, *That he was taken from prison, and from judgment*, Isa. liii. 8. Released and discharged from the prison of the grave in full evidence, that he had payed the whole debt which he had taken upon himself, and that
God

God had accepted the payment at his hands : as the Apostle makes a particular remark upon this, Acts ii. 24. *Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death : Because it was not possible that he should be holden of it ; not possible*, as it is not just or righteous that the prisoner should be kept longer in prison, who hath fully satisfied every demand that the law hath upon him. The resurrection of Christ, therefore, was an open and authentick acknowledgment, that God, considered as the supreme Rector and Judge of the world, acquiesced in the death of Christ, as a full, proper, and perfect satisfaction for sin. And in this light the Apostle considered it, as being the immediate foundation of our justification, or the virtual and fundamental justification of all the elect, as some have properly enough called it, Rom. iv. 25. *Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification*. And this, I conceive, gives us the proper sense of that expression, 1 Tim. iii. 16. where Christ, who was *God manifest in the flesh*, by his dwelling among us in our nature, is said to be *justified in the spirit*, being openly and solemnly acquitted and absolved as the Head of the church, and as having made full and complete satisfaction to divine justice, in his resurrection, which was performed by the powerful agency and operation of the spirit, Rom. i. 4.

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And 'tis with regard to his having received such full satisfaction to his justice, and accepted the atonement in the death of Christ, that God is represented as acting under the peculiar character of a *God of peace*, in his raising Christ from the dead, Heb. xiii. 20. *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.* The words of our excellent commentator * upon this passage are very remarkable. “ Christ, as the great
 “ Shepherd of the sheep, was brought into
 “ the state of death by the sentence of the
 “ law, and was then lead, *recovered*, and re-
 “ stored by the God of peace. — The law
 “ being fulfilled and answered, the sheep be-
 “ ing redeemed by the death of the Shepherd,
 “ the *God of peace*, to evidence that peace
 “ was now perfectly made, by an act of so-
 “ vereign authority brings him again into the
 “ state of life, in a complete deliverance from
 “ the charge of the law.” What a delightful view does this give us of the resurrection of Christ! A risen Saviour, and a reconciled God! How safely may we trust in the one, and with what humble hope apply to the other for pardon and every blessing? As the Apostle argues, when pointing us to the resurrection of Christ as the proper foundation of our faith. 1 Cor. xv. 17, 20. *And if Christ be not raised,*
your

* Dr Owen.

your faith is vain ; ye are yet in your sins.——
But, now is Christ risen from the dead, and
become the first fruits of them that slept. He
 is risen, and our faith may rise with him in
 the assured and joyful expectation of every
 blessing, that as the surety of his people he
 purchased in his death for them ; whereas had
 he continued under the arrest of death, what
 sufficient foundation could we have had for
 our faith in him, or indeed what foundation
 at all ?

Finally, as God raised him from the dead,
 in evidence that he had fully satisfied his jus-
 tice, and perfected the work of our redemp-
 tion, so he received and welcomed him to
 glory, and this completes the evidence hereof.
 For Christ, when he went to Heaven, en-
 tered it as the Surety and Redeemer of his
 people, must therefore enter it upon the foot
 of his having done all that was necessary for
 their redemption and salvation. And in con-
 sequence hereof, how was he as Mediator
 crowned with the highest honour, and invest-
 ed with the fullest power, that he might be
 in every capacity to perfect the designs of his
 grace ? And this leads us into the true mean-
 ing of that remarkable text, Joh. xvi. 10.
where Christ promises his spirit, to convince of
righteousness, because, says he, I go to the
Father, and ye see me no more. In Christ's
going to the Father, that is, in his ascending
 and being welcomed into his immediate pre-
 sence

tence in glory, the spirit *convinces* not only of the righteousness and innocency of Christ's person, but that there is in him a perfect and sufficient righteousness for the justification of his people, such as the Father approves of, and does, and will eternally, acquiesce in: And when 'tis added, *ye see me no more*, that clause seems to have a peculiar emphasis in it, and to direct us to that sense of the foregoing words which I have mentioned. The high priest under the law, when he had finished his work, slain the sacrifice, carried the blood of it into the holy of holies, sprinkled it towards the mercy-seat, and so made the fullest expiation for sin, which that dispensation would admit of, *was seen again*: He came out of the holy of holies, and upon the return of the year *was seen* to go in again. But our Jesus, our *great High Priest over the house of God*, having by the one oblation of himself, made full atonement for sin, and been accepted of God in it, *was seen no more*; he did not, as he needed not, return to add any thing to the *one sacrifice* of his death, to make it more complete and perfect than it was: For *this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right-hand of God.*—*For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*, Heb. x. 12, 14. — As the Apostle in the foregoing chapter, when shewing the superior excellency of the priesthood of Christ to that of all the priests

priests under the law, represents his entring once into Heaven, as an evidence of the complete virtue of his death for the expiation of sin, and the redemption of his people, Heb. ix. 11, 12. *But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entred in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.* And this is of so much importance to establish our faith in the sufficiency and acceptance of the one sacrifice of the death of Christ, that he brings it over again in the most express manner, in the 24th, 25th, and 26th verses of the same chapter. *For Christ is not entred into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entreth into the holy place every year with blood of others: (for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world) but now once in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*

I would add hereto, that I cannot but think, that this is what the Apostle designed to suggest, Heb. viii. 4. when describing the priesthood of Christ, as having every thing in it, that was of necessary use in the priesthood

under the law, he adds, *that if he were on earth he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law.* Not that we are to confine Christ's priesthood to what he transacts in Heaven, in exclusion of the great and important acts of it, which were completed in the oblation of himself upon the cross; as the *Socinians* do, who denying the doctrine of satisfaction, own no oblation of Christ, but what is made in Heaven; we must shut our eyes against the most glaring light of scripture, to exclude Christ's shedding his blood upon the cross from being a part of his priestly office: But when the Apostle says, that if Christ *were on earth he should not be a priest*; his meaning is, either — that if he had always remained on earth without going to Heaven at all, we should have wanted one great evidence, which we now have, that he had offered up a perfect and acceptable sacrifice to God, conformably to what was done by the priests under the *Jewish* dispensation; or else — that he could not have entered upon the full discharge of his priestly office, one branch of which lies in making intercession for his people *, as it was a known part of the ministry of the high priest, when he carried the blood of the sacrifice on the great day of atonement into the holy of holies, to sprinkle it before the ark, and so to offer it up with the prayers of the people,

* Vid. *Limbor.* in loc.

people, and to intercede for them. But now being entered into Heaven he hath, as the *Jewish* priests had under the law, something to offer; for what is Christ's intercession but the presenting or exhibiting the merit of his death and sacrifice on the behalf of his people? And as the prevalence and success of Christ's intercession depend so much upon the excellence and efficacy of his sacrifice, what a clear and evident proof is this, that the death of Christ was a proper and perfect satisfaction for sin, and that God accepted it as such, for otherwise would it be the ground and plea of his intercession? And thus every blessing, which the believer enjoys in the virtue of Christ's intercession, will at the same time be an evidence of the value and efficacy of his death, and of it's acceptableness to God. And so the Apostle, in the seventh chapter of this epistle, where he represents Christ as a priest of a superior order to *Aaron*; *not made after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life; a priest, as he styles him, for ever after the order of Melchisedec, and that hath an unchangeable priesthood*, what neither needs nor admits of a successor: When he comes to give us the proper inference from these several representations, he does it in establishing his complete and absolute all-sufficiency to save; ver. 25. *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession*

for them. The priesthood of Christ drew into it every thing that was valuable and important in the priesthood of *Aaron* and *Melchisedec*, and in some things differed from them both, particularly in this, that *he offered up himself*; as the Apostle farther observes, ver. 27. *who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the peoples: for this he did once when he offered up himself.* He was himself both priest and sacrifice; and such a sacrifice offered up by such a priest, and whose virtue is renewed, as it were, in his intercession, how acceptable must it be with God, and how effectual for the expiation of sin, and for the perfected salvation of all that apply to God in and through him? He may ask what he will, he can ask nothing but what he hath purchased, and shall never be denied.—In short, by Christ's sacrifice offered up upon the cross, atonement was made; and by Christ's sacrifice presented to God in Heaven, the atonement is applied and made effectual for all the purposes for which it was designed. Hence the Apostle, when speaking of the security which the elect have in the death of Christ from condemnation, puts a much *rather* upon it, when he comes to look to his resurrection, ascension, and intercession, Rom. viii. 34. *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right-hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

I have

I have been the more particular in tracing out the Apostle's way of reasoning, when representing the efficacy and acceptableness of the death of Christ for our pardon and justification, because the more we examine into it, with the more force and beauty it will appear; whilst we shall see at the same time, how the securing and perfecting these blessings was uniformly carried on, with the full acceptance of God, through all Christ did and suffered on earth, and is still doing in Heaven. And now, to bring what has been offered upon this head to a point; has God, considered as the supreme Lord and Judge of all, so many ways testified his acceptance of Christ's righteousness, as a full provision for his own glory, and every ways effectual for the purposes for which his children want it, what a firm and sure foundation must this lay for it's being imputed to us, and for our receiving the full advantage of it? If it were not accepted of God, in vain do we plead it, and trust in it: But God's acceptance and approbation concurring, the believer has as full a claim in it, and 'tis as much his for his pardon and justification, as if he had himself wrought it out.

Thus far then we have advanced, and I hope made good our ground; that Christ wrought out this righteousness in pursuit of solemn covenant-transactions between him and the Father from eternity; that it was a righteousness wrought out in that nature that sinned,

and which he purposely assumed, that he might be in a capacity to work it out; that, appearing in our nature to work out this righteousness, he did what he did, and suffered what he suffered, strictly and properly in the room and stead of his people, and as their surety and representative; and that God, the supreme and eternal Judge, is fully satisfied with this righteousness as a sufficient provision for his own glory, and accordingly hath declared his acceptance of it. And what now can be farther wanting to make this righteousness ours for all the purposes for which it was designed, but that there be a way appointed of God in which to receive it, and that we receive it in that way? Hence it follows,

V. That, as there is a way appointed of God in which to be interested in this righteousness, which is that of faith, so upon believing we come to have an actual and personal interest in it.

That there is a way appointed of God, in which we may be interested in this righteousness, and that faith is this way, is the express and uniform language of the whole scripture. *The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, — and is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe. — God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*

Jesus.—*The scripture foresaw that God would justify the Heathen through faith, — and being justified by faith we have peace with God.*— Agreeably to this method and appointment of grace, faith is said to receive the gift of righteousness, Rom. v. 17, And to receive the atonement, ver. 11. The righteousness, by which we are justified, was wrought out long ago: It was perfected in Christ's death, and evidenced to be perfect in his resurrection, when Christ was acquitted, and discharged as the Head and Representative of his people; but it actually terminates upon the soul at the time, and in the way that God hath appointed, which the scripture uniformly declares to be that of believing.

Hence, when a sinner is brought under the power of divine grace, working faith in him, to receive, to apprehend and apply this righteousness, such a sinner is actually and personally justified. And this the Apostle, after a long disputation about it, brings in as the grand establishment of the gospel, Rom. iii. 28. *Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.* Seeing, as he farther adds, ver. 30. *It is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.* I shall add no more testimonies to the many I have already produced upon this head, than that one passage, Phil. iii. 8, 9. where the Apostle is

professedly describing the righteousness by which he was justified, and the way in which he was interested in it. *Yea doubtless, and I do count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.* Where the Apostle, first, most plainly excludes every other righteousness but that of Christ for his justification; every other righteousness was with him no better than *loss* and *dung*, what he rated as nothing worth, and could not, without utmost hazard to his soul, trust in for his justification: Secondly, most plainly distinguishes this righteousness from that faith whereby we receive it, describes it therefore to be *that righteousness which is through the faith of Christ*: and, that we may not be mistaken in a point of such vast importance as the righteousness by which we are justified, brings it over again, *the righteousness which is of God by faith*; as plainly shewing, in the third and last place, how this righteousness is made ours, namely, by believing; nothing can be more express, *the righteousness which is of God by faith*; God imputes it, and faith receives it, and so, according to the constitution

stitution of the gospel, we come to have an actual and personal interest in it.

And this, in it's place, is as necessary as any thing I have already mentioned. What avail all the riches of grace, that are lodged in the covenant, if they are not made mine in the way that God hath appointed? A beggar is not rich by his benefactor's design, unless his bounty be received; nor a criminal clear in the eye of the law, merely because his Prince may have gracious intentions towards him. As it was in the known instance of the passover, it was not enough that the blood was shed, but it must be sprinkled; *and the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you.* God sits judge of every man's state in his word, and there he declares, on the one hand, that *he that believeth not is condemned already*; and on the other, *and by him all that believe are justified from all things.* Agreeably to this the Apostle, when stating the way and manner of our justification upon the plan of *Abraham's*, tells us, *that it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed if we believe,* Rom. iv. 23, 24.

“ Look, says good Mr *Flavel* *, as the sin of
 “ the first *Adam* could never hurt us, unless
 “ he had been our head by way of genera-
 “ tion; so the righteousness of *Christ* can
 “ never

“ never benefit us, unless he be our head by
 “ way of regeneration.” ’Tis by a real and
 living faith, such as is the work of the Spirit
 in regeneration, that we are united to Christ,
 and made vitally one with him, and thus he *is*
made of God unto us righteousness; that righ-
 teousness, which he wrought out for us, comes
 to terminate upon us for our actual and per-
 sonal justification.

And what is there, that can possibly be sup-
 posed to preclude the necessity of faith in
 Christ for our justification? Or that should
 make our justification antecedent to it? Shall
 the decree and purpose of God do this? God
 decreed from all eternity to glorify as well as
 justify the elect, are they therefore glorified
 from eternity? Decreed from eternity to deli-
 ver them from the power of darkness, and
 translate them into the kingdom of his dear
 Son; are they therefore from eternity delivered
 from the one, and translated into the other?
 He decreed from all eternity to make Christ a
 curse for his people, that he might redeem
 them from the curse, was he therefore from
 eternity actually made a curse? “ The conse-
 “ quence is good from the divine purpose, to
 “ the futuration of any thing, and the cer-
 “ tainty of it’s event, not to it’s actual
 “ existence: As when the Lord in the begin-
 “ ning went actually to make the world, there
 “ was no world, so when he comes to bestow
 “ faith, and actually to justify a man, until
 “ he

“ he hath so done, he is not justified. The
 “ truth is, no purpose of God, no immanent
 “ eternal act of his will, doth produce any out-
 “ ward effect, or change any thing, in the
 “ nature and condition of that thing, con-
 “ cerning which his purpose is ; but only
 “ make the event and success necessary in
 “ respect of that purpose *.”

But it will be said, there was more than a decree or purpose in the case ; there were covenant-transactions between the Father and Son from eternity, in which Christ engaged as the surety of his people to redeem and justify them : True ; So there was a covenant-agreement between the Father and Christ, that he should be made a curse for this purpose ; but will any venture to say, that Christ was actually made a curse from eternity ? Besides, it was as much a part of this covenant, that God should justify sinners in a way of believing, as that Christ should suffer and satisfy for them. *By his knowledge, or by faith in him, shall my righteous servant justify many : For he shall bear their iniquities, Isa. liii. 11. †*

I have

* Dr Owen's Death of Death, p. 149.

† This text contains the fullest and most explicit account of the nature and terms of the covenant between the Father and Son, perhaps of any in the whole scripture. And we learn from it, that it was as much an article in this covenant, that we should be justified *by the knowledge* of Christ, or by faith in him, as that, he should take our sins upon himself, and die to make satisfaction to divine justice for them.

I have often, indeed, been greatly at a loss in my own mind, what should induce persons, that profess a value for the gospel scheme of justification by the free grace of God through Christ, to fall into a way of stating the date of it, that seems to have so little foundation in the word of God. Is it from a desire to make this great blessing of the covenant the more secure, that some have represented it as already past, past from eternity? But can any thing be more secure than what stands upon the immoveable foundations of the purpose of God, the eternal covenant between the Father and Son, and the merit and efficacy of the blood of Christ? Or does any blessing that is so supported, stand in need of any imaginary schemes of ours to make it more secure? Or is it from a concern to maintain the honour of Christ's headship? But is there not full provision made for the honour of that in the certain justification of the elect in the time and way that God hath appointed? Rather we should fear, lest we weaken and dishonour it, by laying more upon it than it was designed to bear, or, in the nature of things, can bear. Or is it, that those who partake in this blessing may derive the richer comfort from it? But even they who contend the most warmly for justification from eternity, will own that it is only upon believing, and in a way of believing, that the least degree of comfort can be derived from it? Or is it from a desire and concern to raise the honour of free grace to the
highest

highest pitch? A noble design this; nor can that grace, to which we are so much indebted, and upon which all our hopes rest, be too great in our eye: But we should fear, lest, under the pretence of exalting grace, we should introduce those principles that are inconsistent with the great scheme that is carried on by it. The way of our justification by faith is so far from abridging or obscuring the grace of God, that 'tis the highest illustration of it; as the Apostle instances, Rom. iv. 16. *That therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace.* Grace will accomplish its designs in its own way, and no other; and what that way is, is laid down in words too strong to be perverted, and too plain to be misunderstood.

But what is still more surprising, is, that there are those who will have all that the scripture says, so plainly and expressly of justification by faith, to mean no more than a manifestation of our justification. But this is a notion loaded with too many absurdities, to need many words to confute it. If that justification by faith, of which the scriptures treat so fully, were only a manifestation, it must be so either with respect to God, or with respect to others, or with respect to ourselves. It cannot be understood of a manifestation with respect to God; for *known unto God are all his works from the beginning*, and he needs no act of ours in time to make our justification more manifest to him than it was from all eternity: nor can it be understood
of

of a manifestation with respect to *others*; for so 'tis not by faith alone, but rather by works, according to the Apostle *James's* challenge, *Shew me thy faith, and so thy justification, without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith, and so my justification, by my works,* Jam. ii. 18. Nor, finally, can it be understood of a manifestation of our justification with respect to *ourselves*; for then all that believe would know that they are justified; but how contrary is this to the experiences of the saints, and to the scriptures, which often describe *a child of light walking in darkness, and having no light?* Is. l. 10. Besides, that this would make our justification the most wavering, pendulous, uncertain thing in the world; whereas justification is a stable, fixed, permanent blessing, and which, where it has pass'd according to the tenor of the covenant, abides unchangeably the same. Once more, the scripture most plainly excludes all our own inherent righteousness, and works of every sort from all agency and interest in that justification, which is by faith; but will any say, that all the graces of the Spirit, and duties of gospel obedience are excluded from being of any use in the manifestation of our justification? Finally, what is it, that the spirit convinces of, when he comes to work faith in the soul? Is it not, that we are *children of wrath by nature?* Is it not, that, antecedently to our believing in Christ, and till by faith we have received him, we are in a state
of

of guilt and condemnation? We must therefore be in such a state, unless we will make all these convictions of the Spirit, and by which such great and important purposes are answered, to be mistakes and delusions.

But perhaps I have said too much of this; for one can hardly guess what persons mean, when they offer this as a proper explication of the great and important doctrine of justification by faith, and would persuade us, that when the Apostle sets himself so carefully to state and explain this doctrine, to open it out in its glory, and to vindicate it from the many objections that were raised against it by the *Jews* on one hand, and a great number of false teachers in the christian church on the other, all he contends and pleads for, and would establish, is no more than a manifestation. To proceed :

VI. The sinner being thus by faith interested in the righteousness of Christ, is henceforth esteemed perfectly righteous in the sight of God, and is so; not indeed in any righteousness of his own, but in that of *Christ*, which faith receives, and God accepts. Appearing at the tribunal of the great God, and pleading this righteousness, thereupon he stands *rectus in curia*, clear in law, and is pronounced righteous. “ Thus the
“ sinner is brought in (as it were, in a judicial
“ process) in our text, holding up his hand,
“ (as an excellent man * has express’d it in his
plain

* *Cass’s Mount Pisgah*, part II. p. 147.

“ plain and familiar, but striking way) at the
 “ the judgment seat, the judge upon the bench
 “ bespeaking him thus: Sinner, thou standest
 “ indicted for breaking the holy and just, and
 “ good law of thy maker, and hereof thou
 “ art proved guilty: Sinner, what hast thou
 “ to say for thyself, &c. To this the sinner,
 “ upon his bended knee, confesseth guilty;
 “ but withal humbly craves leave to plead for
 “ himself full satisfaction made by his surety:
 “ *It is Christ that died*, Rom. viii. 34. —
 “ And whereas it is farther objected by the
 “ judge: I but, sinner, the law requireth an
 “ exact and perfect righteousness in thy perso-
 “ nal fulfilling of the law! Sinner, where is
 “ thy righteousness? The believing sinner
 “ humbly replieth, my righteousness is upon
 “ the Bench; *in the Lord have I righteousness*.
 “ Christ, my surety, hath fulfilled *the* law on
 “ my behalf, to that I appeal, and by that I
 “ will be tried: This done, the plea is accept-
 “ ed as good in law; the sinner is pronounced
 “ righteous, and goeth away glorying and re-
 “ joicing, righteous, righteous! *In the Lord*
 “ *shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall*
 “ *glory.*”

And this seems to be the plain and evident
 sense of several texts, which are of too great
 importance not to be review'd under this head.
 As when Christ is said *to be made of God unto us*
righteousness, 1 Cor. i. 30, 'tis meant of a
 righteousness for justification; and how com-
 plete

plete must that righteousness be which we have in Christ for our justification, as he is *made of God unto us righteousness*, or as his righteousness is reckoned and imputed of God unto us for this purpose? So he is said to be *the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*, Rom. x. 4. 'Tis evidently spoken of what Christ is in reference to some law, in order to a sinner's justification. He is not the *end* of the ceremonial law for this purpose, that law being never given for a sinner to be justified by it: It must therefore be understood of what Christ is in reference to the moral law, that law whose strict demands the Apostle represents in the next verse; And how is Christ the *end* of this law, but as we have in his perfect and complete obedience, that righteousness which the law calls for? What the law would have been to us, if we had perfectly obey'd it, that Christ is in his righteousness. His righteousness is the *end*, the completion and fulfilment of the law, what answers its most extensive requirements, and in the face of the law, strict and unyielding as it is, we may appeal to it, and trust in it for our justification, as 'tis for this purpose imputed to those that believe. Yet farther; he, *who* in his own person *knew no sin*, is said to be *made sin for us*, by the imputation of our sin to him, that *we*, in a parallel way, by the imputation of his righteousness to us, *might be made the righteousness of God in him*, 2. Cor. v. 21. And by the *obedi-*

ence of one many are made righteous; made and constituted *righteous* by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, even as we are *made sinners* by the imputation of *Adam's* sin, Rom. v. 19. As the plain design of the Apostle, in that context, is to shew, on the one hand, how sin was transmitted from *Adam* to those whom he represented, so that they became legally subject to misery and death; and on the other, how righteousness is transmitted from Christ to those whom he represented, so that they are in a legal way justified and entitled unto life. In short, *he fulfilled all righteousness*, Mat. iii. 15. fully answered all the obligations of the law under which he came. And as he did this in our nature and stead, in him *the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us*; fulfilled for us, and in us, in him as our head, Rom. viii. 4. And upon this foot the Apostle declares in so express a manner, ver. 1. of that chapter, that *there is no condemnation to them that are in him*. Dost thou belong to Christ, and art thou by humble faith united to him, thou art plac'd out of the reach of condemnation? Thou art absolved in him, absolved in him as thy head, and accepted thro' him as thy righteousness; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, Acts xiii. 39.

And this is being justified, the having such an interest in that righteousness which Christ as mediator hath wrought out, and brought in;

as

as a great man * said, " Justification is a man's
 " being interested in all Christ's righteousness." This is that *fine linnen, clean, and white* : for *the fine linen is the righteousness of Saints*, Rev. xix. 8. And God is said *to clothe his people with the garments of salvation, and to cover them with the robe of righteousness*, Is. lxi. 10. 'Tis upon the soul in believing in all its extent, and for all the kind and important purposes for which it was designed ; its protection from wrath, and recommendation to the divine acceptance and favour ; its title to every blessing, and to complete salvation. I farther observed ; That the righteousness of Christ being in this way made a believer's, for his actual and personal justification, none of the parties concerned have any reason to complain ; But 'tis to the satisfaction, and with the full consent of them all. Whilst, in the last place, It does, and ever will continue his justifying righteousness ; God will for ever own it as such, nor shall any enemy dispossess him of it.

But these are things that, I hope, will claim our attention in another discourse ; as they go a great way into the reasons of our hope. And I can't but think, that the want of viewing the whole scheme of our justification laid together in its proper connexion and dependencies, is one great thing that has caused endless mistakes about it ; as the neglect of conversing with it in such light deprives the

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the

* Dr. Lightfoot.

believer of a great deal of that consolation, which he might otherwise derive from it. In the meantime, let us conclude with a brief

R E C O L L E C T I O N.

Can we take a view of what has been said, without lifting up our hearts in the warmest acknowledgments of that grace which runs thro' this whole establishment? *Lord! what is man, that thou art thus mindful of him?* What could be the spring of such a design? form and establish such a method of justifying sinners, but infinite wisdom in concert with sovereign and everlasting love? How miserable had our case been, had God debated with us in the terrors of his justice, and entered into a holy and righteous judgment with us, in our own persons? He saw us lost, guilty, ruined; sunk under the curse of the law, lying under all the ruins of an apostate state, and every ways unable to help ourselves; but then mercy opened its melting eye, and *God's time was the time of Love*: Then, in the counsels of the Trinity, the great design was formed of redeeming and saving sinners, and Christ, the Son of God, was set up from everlasting, to whom the whole design was committed, and by and thro' whom it was to be executed. And how readily did he undertake the work, and offer himself to do, and suffer all that was necessary to effect it? *The Lord God opened his ear, and*
he

he was not rebellious : Then said I, lo, I come to do thy will. And accordingly, *in the fulness of time*, how did he appear in our natures, and with what joy gird up himself for the great undertaking ? *He had power to lay down his life, and power to take it again ;* and with infinite readiness and condescension, he lays it down, resigns his precious life, that he might fulfil the kind design. *He was found in fashion as a man, and humbled himself to death.* In him the nature, that sinned in us, obey'd and suffer'd ; that broke and dishonour'd the law, kept, and honour'd, and fulfill'd it. He knew what it would cost him, if he would undertake for sinners, for his people ; with what terrors justice would fall upon him, and what demands he must answer : But as *God did not spare his own Son*, so the eternal Son did not spare himself. We see him in his sufferings and death, hanging upon the cross, and expiring under the load of our sins and guilt, so we rejoice in him. He obeys, and suffers in the room of his people, to satisfy divine justice for them, and to *bring in everlasting righteousness.* *The chastisement of our peace was laid upon him, and by his stripes we are healed.* His wounds are our healing, and his death is our pardon and life.

It adds to our joy, that as God hath appointed him to this work, so he hath accepted him in it. *He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.* We see him risen, ascended, gone to glory ; cloth'd with

the highest honours, and wearing every mark of God's acceptance and approbation. Nor will God disown that righteousness in his people, which he hath already put such an honour upon in the person of their surety and Saviour! And as there is a way appointed in which we may receive it, and be interested in it, shall we not apply to it, and look after an interest in it in that way? Receive it by faith, receive the atonement, and bid the Redeemer and his righteousness welcome? O, my soul! this nearly concerns thee: Hast thou an interest in this righteousness? 'Tis an all-sufficient righteousness, a divine appointment for pardon and acceptance with God; as such, hast thou received it, and dost thou by humble faith rest all thy hopes upon it?

S E R M O N IV.

ISAIAH xlv. former part of the 24th
verse.

*Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have
I righteousness.*

IN our last discourse on these words, we enter'd upon the enquiry, how the righteousness of Christ, that righteousness which is originally and subjectively without us, comes to be made ours for our actual and personal justification: To which it has been answered in general, that this is done by *Imputation*. God mercifully and graciously imputes and reckons it to the soul in believing; and so we come, according to the tenor and constitution of the new covenant, to have a real and pleadable interest in it. And as this is a point of great importance in the gospel scheme of justification, several things have been observed to clear up the nature of this *Imputation*, and explain the grounds on which it proceeds; which having been distinctly considered, I am now to add,

VII. That the righteousness of Christ being in this way made the believer's, for his actual and personal justification, none of the parties concerned have any reason to complain; but 'tis to the satisfaction, and with the full consent of them all*.

The parties concerned in this important transaction are, the law, which we have broken and violated by sin; God himself, offended by the sin of man, and concerned to maintain the honour of his own law; the Lord Jesus Christ, who wrought out this righteousness, and whose it originally is; and the believing sinner, to whom it is imputed, and who is interested in all the effects and blessings of it. Let us examine how the matter stands as to each of these. And

I. The law can't complain, for that is satisfied, and satisfied in a nobler way, and more perfect manner, than it could have been by any righteousness or obedience of ours.

(I.) 'Tis satisfied, fully satisfied. The law consists of two parts, the precept and the penalty; and Christ acting as the surety of his people, hath satisfied both of them.

Take

* This is a thought that has been made good use of in relieving some of the main difficulties, that have been laid upon our scheme of justification upon a satisfaction; and as I apprehend it to be an important one, and what throws a good deal of light all round it, I have enter'd the more largely into it. See *Case* as above, p. 149, and *Wils. Oeconom. lib. i. cap. v. § 4, 5, 6, &c.* where there are several just and excellent remarks to the purpose of what I have more fully represented.

Take it as to the preceptive part of the law; what does or could the law call for which is not to be found in the obedience and righteousness of Christ? Does it require holiness of nature, or an exact conformity of all our powers to its own absolute and perfect rectitude? He was conceived in all the beauties of spotless and perfect holiness. The pollution of original sin never reach'd him; that sin of our natures, and which is derived down upon all mankind from the fountain head of our beings, the least taint of it never fastened upon him. As the angel describes him with an eye to his immaculate conception of the Virgin, Luke i. 35. *That holy thing which shall be born of thee.* Does it likewise require perfect and sinless obedience in the life? This was no less to be found in Christ. *He fulfilled all righteousness; was God's righteous servant, and ever did the things that pleased him.* As he was *made under the law*, so he perfectly obey'd it. *The law of God was in his heart:* He set it ever before him as a perfect rule of obedience, and from that law he never swerv'd. His life was a bright and unspotted mirror of all that obedience, which the law calls for, in its most perfect and amiable forms. He could appeal to his most bitter and implacable enemies, *which of you convinceth me of sin? Was tempted in all things like as we are, yet without sin;* and thro' every period of life could still say, *Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's work?* He obey'd the law in
its

its utmost extent and latitude ; obey'd it with the utmost perfection with regard to the manner, as well as the matter of obedience ; and this he did to the end, with the greatest cheerfulness, and without fainting : As, once more, he pay'd down all this obedience to the law, from the noblest principles to the noblest ends. *It was his meat to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work : And he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him.* An ardent concern for the salvation of his people engaged him in it, and a sacred regard to the glory of God carried him thro' it : And therefore, when he was entering upon the last stage of his obedience, he could look upwards, *Father, I have glorified thee on earth ; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do,* Joh. xvii. 4. Supreme love to God, and the highest love to the souls of men animated his whole conduct : And from these principles how full, entire, and complete was his obedience to the law under which he was ? As 'tis very observable, that Christ submitted to those ordinances that were of a positive nature upon this foot, *that it became him to fulfil all righteousness,* Mat. iii. 15. It was a necessary part of that obedience, which was owing to a divine institution, and therefore he came under the ordinance of baptism, tho' he had no sin to be washed away by it ; As before in infancy, tho' he had no impurities to be put off, he had passed under the ordinance of circumcision :

Or

Or he was circumcised to intimate his communion with the *Jewish* church ; and baptized to signify his communion with the christian church, the ordinances of which were both alike of God.

Hence the Apostle, when representing Christ's fitness and qualification for his work as our great high priest, Heb. vii. 26, tells us, *For such an high priest became us **, suited our case, and was necessary for us, *who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens*. Our great high priest was *holy*, his nature was absolutely free from all the stain and pollution of sin, that *holiness to the Lord †*, which was inscribed upon the mitre of the high priest, was inscribed upon his heart ; *harmless*, with respect to his innocent and inoffensive conduct and behaviour towards man, he offered no injury to any man's person or property, *did no violence, neither*.

* Ostendit solum Jesum Christum fuisse, in quem convenient qualitates ejus pontificis, qui nos per se, ac propria sua oblatione Deo patri reconciliatos, & in perpetuum salvos redderet. Quare quod ait, *decebat*, non sic accipiendum, quasi per alium potuerit idem illud officium præstari ; tametsi minus decenter ; sed quia per neminem alium omnino potuit. *Essius* in loc.

† קֹדֶשׁ קִדְּשׁוֹ qui non laminæ, sed menti inscriptum habeat קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה [Sanctitas Domino] Exodi xxxix, 30. *Grotius* in locum. Dr. *Whitby*, by the *holiness* of Christ, understands his being consecrated to his office ; and in that sense all the utensils of the tabernacle and temple were stiled *holy*. “ But since the word ὁσιος, “ as Mr. *Pierce* has observed upon the place, is never, as far as “ he can find, so used, we must rather take it here to refer to “ what is commonly meant by *holiness*, an internal disposition “ of mind. Nor can there be any doubt, that such an holiness “ was absolutely necessary in our great high priest.” Besides, that the Apostle is not here speaking so much of Christ's consecration to his office, as of his fitness and qualifications for it.

*ther was any deceit in his mouth; undefiled, tho' he pass'd thro' a sinful world, and upon particular occasions convers'd with sinners in a free and friendly manner, upon which account his enemies reproached him, yet he contracted no manner of defilement from any person, or thing whatever; separate from sinners, in principle and practice, maintaining the utmost distance from them, whatever communion he had with them in the same nature, he had none at all with them in their sins; and made higher than the heavens, that is, higher in the glory of every perfection than the angels *, the spotless inhabitants of heaven, consequently his holiness was of a superior kind to theirs, and what is absolutely impossible, should be ever lost, or tainted with the least sin. And from such a perfect principle of holiness, did every act of obedience flow. He was a lamb without blemish and without spot; who was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin, 1 Pet. i. 19. i. Joh. iii. 5. Who needeth not therefore, (as the Apostle says of the Jewish high priests, Heb. vii. 27.) to offer up sacrifice first for his own*

* Mr. Pierce, in his notes upon Heb. ch. i. 10. has shown, that the *heavens* are often put for the inhabitants thereof, the angels. And if this sense of the word be admitted, what should hinder our understanding, what is said of Christ's *being made higher than the angels*, of his being more perfect in holiness, as well as in every other respect, than the most exalted of mere creatures? Nothing could be more suitable to the Apostle's design than this, when representing the dignity of Christ's priesthood, and his superior fitness for it. By the *fullness of the Godhead dwelling in him*, he was sanctified in a degree above angels.

own sins, must therefore be the better fitted to make atonement for the sins of others.

What a glorious obedience was here, performed to the preceptive part of the law in its utmost extent and purity ! And can the law complain, when the sinner is justified thro' such an obedience performed unto it ? In short, here lies the case : “ No man since the fall being
 “ able to keep the law and fulfil it, and yet
 “ God requiring still, that the law should be obeyed and the righteousness of it fulfilled, Christ
 “ was content freely and of his own accord (who
 “ was otherwise free and disengaged) to be under the law, and by obeying the law, to bring
 “ in such a righteousness as the law requires* ”.

And as the command of the law was perfectly obeyed, so the penalty of the law was perfectly undergone. There was nothing in the penalty of the law, which Christ did not bear ; nor threatened in it, as the just punishment of sin, to which he did not submit ; that sword, which was edged with wrath, was sheathed in his bowels ; that cup, which was mingled with so much bitterness, was with all its dregs poured into his bosom ; and, in one word, the curse of God, in all its weight, fell upon Christ, when he hung upon the cross a dying victim for the sins of his people : *As it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*

Hence

* *Vid. Rowe's Immanuel*, p. 165.

Hence we find the sufferings of Christ represented by every thing that may give us a view of the greatness and terribleness of them. *He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and never was sorrow like to his sorrow; it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and to put him to grief; he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; poured out his soul to death; and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross.* Who can tell what he bore in the garden, when, under the pressure of that load that was upon him, *he began to be sorrowful, and very heavy; and his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death?* And as his agony increased, *how was his sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground, insomuch, that an angel appeared to strengthen him?* Mat. xxvi. 37, 38. Luke, xxii. 43, 44. And upon the cross, how high did his distress rise, when he cried out in his extremest sufferings, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Hear, O Heavens, and be astonished, O earth:* Shall the Son of the bosom be forsaken of his Father, and his God? And forsaken of him when he is fulfilling the counsels of his will, and paying down the highest instance of obedience? But 'tis not that the Father's heart is changed, but justice must be satisfied, satisfied at any rate. God then saw the sins of his people charged upon him, and to be expiated by his sufferings and death; and this made him bear in upon him with

with such painful sensations of his wrath, and draw so thick a cloud between the light of his countenance, and the suffering Saviour; nor did he expire till he could say, *it is finished*; the law has no more to demand, the labours of my cross are at end, the full obedience, that was to be completed by me, is perfected.

'Tis strange, after all the affecting representations which the scripture gives us of Christ's sufferings, that any should be found, who industriously set themselves to lessen and depreciate them. This, indeed, has not been always done upon the same principles; but whatever their pleas have been, I can't but think they are in some degree guilty of this, who will by no means allow, that Christ bore the *idem*, the same death, the same curse that was threatened in the law as due to sin, and to us for it. But surely they who urge this, never took such a view as they might, and as they ought, of the agonies and sufferings of a dying Saviour: For what was that part of the sentence of the law, that was gone out against sin, which he did not submit unto? Only here we must distinguish between what is essential to punishment, and what relates to the circumstances of it; and carrying this easy distinction along with us, I say, what was that part of the sentence of the law, that was gone out against sin, which he did not submit unto? Was it the primitive threatning, *in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*? And was not that

that part of the sentence executed upon him? He tasted death, and became obedient to it; Body and soul were separated; *and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.* Was there a curse lodg'd and wrapp'd up in the threatening? In what way did he redeem from the curse of the law, but by being himself *made a curse for us?* Has the law any thing more dreadful in all its stores, than the wrath of God? And who ever bore this, if the blessed Jesus did not? What infinite Almighty wrath did he encounter, when the Father, the righteous eternal judge, awaken'd his sword against him, and *did not spare his own Son*; made him no abatement, deducted nothing from the full and just punishment due to sin? Well might he complain, as he does in the person of his type, *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me,* Psal. cxvi. 3. *Tho' he were a son, yet learned he obedience, by the things which he suffered,* Heb. v. 8. Finally, does the death, which is threatened in the law, lie in a separation from the comfortable presence of God, and is this the death of death to be separated from the enjoyment of him who is the fountain of life? We have heard his doleful complaint, and agonizing cry, *Eli, Eli, Lama Sabaethani* *, *My God, my God, why hast*

* A late learned writer thinks, when our Saviour is brought in by the Evangelist, crying out, *Eli, Eli, Lama Sabaethani*, that he not only repeated these words, which are the title, or first

hast thou forsaken me? 'Tis true, the sanctity of Christ's nature, the dignity of his person, and his everlasting dearness to the Father, forbid, that he should be eternally separated from him; but as this was the last and extremest part of the curse of the law due to sin, Christ himself comes under it, and for a time submits to it; though, as the issue shew'd, and was necessary, he soon emerged from under this thick cloud, and gloriously triumph'd, as having exhausted the whole curse. In one word, the whole curse was drained by him; " And that punish-
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first words of the twenty-second psalm, but that he repeated the whole psalm, in which there are the most lively strokes of all the remarkable particulars of his passion; so that he seems here to have, as it were, reminded his heavenly Father, how he was fulfilling all those prophecies contained in that psalm, which is a kind of epitome or summary of all the other oracles relating to his sufferings and death. In consequence of which, he was praying to him that he would make good to him, and to his spiritual posterity, that is, to his church, all those gracious promises which are contained in the latter part of the psalm, from the 22d verse to the end. But if all this be granted, I don't see how it any ways affects the opinion of *Calvin*, and others, concerning the dereliction of Christ upon the cross, which this gentleman says some have carried to such a height, as cannot be read without horror: For their opinion is not, as he misrepresents it, that the deity had withdrawn every spark of comfort and hope from Christ; but that as he was then undergoing the punishment of sin, in consequence thereof he was, for a while and in a high degree, deprived of those full and sensible manifestations of the divine favour which he had always enjoyed; and this made him cry out in his extreme distress, as one forsaken of God; tho', in the midst of all, we can't but observe how he claim'd in his relation to him. Nor is there any thing in this unworthy the Saviour, but what is every ways agreeable to the character he bore, and the work he came about. Vid. *Calv.* in *Mat.* xxvii. 46.

“ ment, which, (as one * has exprefs’d it) if
 “ he were to suffer it, would have been drawn
 “ out unto all eternity, was all folded up toge-
 “ ther, and laid upon Christ at once, who
 “ through the infiniteness of his person was able
 “ to support it.”

And if still it is objected, that his sufferings were not the same that were threatned in the law, because they were not eternal, as the sufferings of the damned in hell are. I answer, the eternity of the sufferings of the damned is not the primary intent and design of the law. The primary intent and design of the law in that sanction, which is annexed to it, is, to vindicate the honour of the divine government, which is invaded by sin; and the sinner being impotent to do this by any temporary sufferings, because of the weakness of his nature, hence, what is wanting in value, is made up in the duration of his torments. And if Christ will pay down in one round sum, and so be discharged, that which we can only pay in smaller sums, which being no ways equal to the demands of infinite justice, we can never hope to come to the end of payment, shall we, upon this account, depreciate his sufferings? The highest and most rigid justice can do no more than proportion the punishment to the sin; and the sufferings of Christ, in regard of the dignity of his person, bear more proportion to the evil of sin, than the sufferings of any mere crea-

* Bishop Hopkins.

creature, however circumstanc'd, and prolonged to eternity. And this leads me to observe,

(2.) That the law can have no occasion of complaint, for 'tis satisfied in a higher and nobler way than it could have been by our most perfect obedience and extremest sufferings.

What can reflect a higher honour upon the law, than an obedience payed to it in the person of the Son of God? Such was the obedience paid to it in the person of our *Immanuel*. He was truly God, as really man; and so the Son of God, as to be equal with him in all his essential and unchangeable glories. As the Apostle observes, when setting forth the most astonishing condescension of Christ, in the nature he assumed, and the sufferings he submitted to, Philip. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9. *Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* Blessed God! Must thine own Son obey and die, rather than thou wilt recede from the high and righteous demands of the law? That the honour of the law may be maintained, and the glory of the law vindicated, must obedience be paid to it by its own Lord? “ This (says Dr. Owen excellently and justly,) was the highest act of obedi-

“ence to God, that ever was, or ever shall be
 “to all eternity.” Had all the angels in heaven stoop’d from their thrones, and sunk into the meanest slaves, to yield the law the fullest subjection and obedience, what were this to the abasement and obedience of the Son of God? The law therefore can’t complain; that has been fully answered in all its demands, and lost none of the regards due unto it. What is done in this method of a sinner’s justification, by the obedience and death of Christ, is with the entire consent of the law, and to its full content. Neither

2. Can God himself, the offended party, complain. And the reason of this is very obvious in what has been but now observed; for however sin is the greatest reproach to all the perfections of God, especially as they are exercised in the government of man, according to the terms of the law which he hath given him; yet where the law don’t complain, the lawgiver and supreme judge can’t complain, because that is the standing rule by which he proceeds in all his acts of moral government. Had, indeed, the guilty sinner been justified, and admitted again to favour, without any regard to the just requirements of the law, the case had been very different; but where the honour of the law is provided for, the honour of the lawgiver, and who is guardian of the law, is safe; and so far as the rights of that are maintained,

tained, God effectually preserves the credit of his own wisdom, justice, holiness, and truth, which are inscribed on it.

But we may a little more particularly observe, that the whole affair of our pardon and justification by the obedience and righteousness of Christ is transacted in such a way, as is infinitely well pleasing to God.

(1.) As the whole design was originally from him. We were first in the treason, but God was first in the pardon: He saw us lying under all the guilt and ruins of the fall, lost in misery, alike unable to help ourselves, and undeserving that God should pity and help us; but then had he compassion on us, and in the gift of his Son made early and effectual provision for our recovery. This was the time, and such was the way of his love. *Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom,* Job xxxiii 24. God found the ransom, appointed the way, and provided the price of our redemption: And *herein is love*, the greatest and highest instance and expression of love, *not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins,* 1 Joh. iv. 10. There the Apostle lays the emphasis, as well he might, *not that we loved God, but that he loved us.* We made no motion towards a return to him, the God from whom we had departed; nor could we ever have offered

any thing for the satisfaction of his justice, but what would have been despised. Infinite, self-moving love first kindled up this design in the bosom of God : all was the ordination of of heaven ; and when the rage of the enemies of our blessed Jesus boiled hottest, and would be content with nothing but his death, *he was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God* ; and they were doing nothing but what *God's hand and his counsel determined before to be done*, Acts ii. 23, Acts iv. 27, 28. The wickedness and violence of men only subserved God's ancient and original purpose. As our Saviour intimated to his disciples, when he saw the base and treacherous design which Judas had form'd against him, just ripe for execution, Luke xii. 22. *And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: But wo unto that man by whom he is betrayed.* The whole design therefore was originally from God, and had its rise in the free and sovereign appointments of his grace, *who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.* Let me add for our standing comfort, that that love which first form'd and plan'd the design, will never throw it aside, till it hath completed and perfected it. This purpose of God shall stand, and this grand design of grace as it was originally from him, so he will always own it.

(2.) In this way of pardoning and justifying sinners, all the perfections of God shine out with

with additional and the brightest lustre. As the Apostle has observed what a condescency there is in the way of our salvation by the death of Christ to all the divine perfections, Heb. ii. 10. *For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.* Here it is, that *mercy and truth are met together: righteousness and peace have kissed each other,* Psal. lxxxv. 10. Infinite justice and boundless mercy, unspotted holiness and everlasting truth, mutually, as it were, smile upon, and congratulate each other. God appears a just God in punishing sin, a merciful God in pardoning the sinner. Sin is condemned to hell, that justice may triumph in the punishment of it, whilst, at the same time, the sinner is raised to the hope of heaven, that grace may triumph in his pardon and salvation. He appears a holy God, in that he will not admit the sinner to any intercourse with himself, or interest in his favour, but in a way that shall evidence his hatred of sin, and highest indignation against it; and O how holy! in that when he espies sin upon his own Son, tho' it was there only by imputation, his wrath flames out against it. And how faithful was he to his threatening, in that, rather than depart from the honours of it, all the death that was lodged in it, shall be pour'd upon the only, the eternally beloved Son? What shall we say of the power of God, in

making the cross of Christ, the great instrument of our pardon, victorious over all opposition, and shaking the throne of Satan by that death, which one would have thought was the ready way to establish it? And with what a glory is this power display'd, when the doctrine of free remission in the blood of Christ triumphs over all the corruption and pride of nature, and the most stubborn and stout-hearted sinners are brought to submit themselves the captives of a redeemer's grace? Here are wonders upon wonders, miracles of power uniting with miracles of mercy, and all the terrors of justice mingling with the triumphs of everlasting grace. Finally, what deep and legible impressions are there of the wisdom of God upon this whole scheme? As the Apostle, speaking of our redemption and pardon by the death of Christ, tells us, that *God hath abounded herein towards us in all wisdom and prudence*, Eph. i. 8; And that one great end of the gospel-dispensation was, *that unto the principalities and powers might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God*, Eph. iii. 10. How wonderful and astonishing the wisdom of God, in finding out an expedient to reconcile the different claims of justice and mercy, and give each of them their own proper glory, in full consistency with the honour of the other? To see hell poured out upon sin, whilst the sinner is raised and preferred to heaven! To see the curse of the law executed in its fullest extent, and the grace of
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the gospel exalted in its highest glory ! Justice maintaining its rights, and with a steady hand vindicating the authority of the divine government, and yet pardons freely dispensed, and the guilty sinner welcomed and entertained in the arms of everlasting mercy ! Mercy gratified in its most chosen designs, and justice receding from none of its demands ! In one word, — God and man reconciled, a just and holy God, and guilty sinful man ; God satisfied, and the sinner saved ! How glorious must that wisdom be, which formed a design to effect all this, and conducted that design through so many opposing interests to so happy an issue ? Well might the Apostle cry out, as in a transport, Rom. xi. 33. *O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God !* There are those displays of the wisdom of God in our pardon and salvation by Christ, which are no where else to be equal'd.

When therefore the question has sometimes been put, whether God could not have pardoned sin, and justified and saved the sinner, in some other way than by the obedience and death of Christ, the common answer that has been give by our divines has been this ; that tho' God might have found out other ways, yet he could have pitched upon none, in which his own glory would have been so fully provided for : and this, for ought I know, may be a proper answer, if we are allowed to put the question ; most certainly, in this way of pardon and salvation,

vation, there is the highest illustration of the glory of all the divine perfections. But however, I rather think the question don't become us; 'tis above our reach; our curiosity should be turned into admiration and praise. Instead of enquiring what infinite wisdom, and power, and goodness, could, or could not, do; instead of enquiring after other ways of salvation, and the possibility of them, we should adore this wonderful appointment of divine wisdom; and whilst the glory of God shines out so brightly in it, our duty is to close with it, and thankfully accept of that grace which is here exhibited.

(3.) and *lastly*. 'Tis plain that all was done with the full consent of the Father, and to his entire satisfaction, for he has in the fullest manner declared his well-pleasedness with it. Hence that great design, whereby pardon, grace, and life are restored and secured by the sufferings and death of Christ, is in a peculiar manner said to be *the pleasure of the Lord*, *Is. liii. 10.* and God is said *to be well pleased for his righteousness sake*, *Is. xlii. 21.* Was it his pleasure to have his justice satisfied, his law honoured, his grace recommended and exalted? It must be his pleasure to see Christ dying *to bring in everlasting righteousness*, for in his death all this was effected. And 'tis very observable to our present purpose, that when Christ entered upon his publick ministry, it
was

was usher'd in by an audible voice from heaven; and what did this voice proclaim, but how grateful Christ's person and undertaking were to the Father, and what pleasure he took in him, *as fulfilling all righteousness?* He view'd him then setting out in his great undertaking, subjecting himself to the law, and preparing for all the instances of his future obedience; and then you have it by an immediate voice from heaven, *this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*, Mat. iii. 17. And afterwards, when his death was coming on, and he was about to pay the last and greatest instance of obedience to the will of God, how was this testimony renewed, when there came *a voice out of the cloud, (a voice from the excellent glory, as the Apostle Peter describes it, 2 Pet. i. 17) saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him*, Mat. xvii. 5.

And this exactly agrees with the language in which the Prophets had long before described the infinite complacency and delight, which the Father had in Christ as Mediator. He was *God's servant, whom he would uphold; his Elect in whom his soul delighted; who should deal prudently, and be exalted, and be very high; who should be glorious in the eyes of the Lord; with whom his hand should be established, and his arm should strengthen him*. Or, if you look before all worlds, then was Christ *the delight of the Father, rejoicing always before him*. I might mention several other things as strong evidences of

of the Father's well-pleasedness with Christ in his work ; such as the raising him from the dead ; the receiving him to heaven in such a triumphant manner, and investing him upon his ascension, with such a fullness of power to carry on the designs of his mediatorial kingdom ; the sending the Spirit, both in his extraordinary and ordinary gifts, to attest to his character and mission, bring a lost world to the obedience and faith of the gospel, and spread abroad a Redeemer's name and glory ; the erecting a gospel ministry in the church, on purpose to invite sinners to accept of that grace which is provided in him, and be reconciled to God in and through him ; together with the receiving, pardoning, and saving penitent believing sinners upon the foot of his obedience, merit, and death : These are all so many illustrious evidences, how dear and acceptable Christ was to the Father, and what unspeakable complacency he took in the work of our salvation, as transacted by him. And taking them all together, what a firm foundation do they lay for faith in God ? 1 Pet. i. 21. *Who by him do believe in God that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.* In a word, the Father's heart was early, and always in this work. The way of our redemption was of his appointing, and the righteousness of the Mediator of his providing ; surely then he will never complain of, nor reject those, who in this way apply unto him. To proceed,

3. Every thing in this way of a sinner's justification is transacted with the entire consent, and to the full satisfaction of the Lord Jesus Christ. 'Tis true, he hath gone thro' unheard-of sufferings, and there is no article among the numerous blessings of the covenant, but what cost him dear. Our pardon is the price of his blood, and our redemption the fruit of his fore travel ; but yet he never did, he never will, complain. For

(1.) He freely offered himself to the work. Work is best done by a willing servant ; *then said I, lo, I come, I delight to do thy will, O God.* The service was hot, but Christ was not pressed into it against his will. As God gave him, appointed him to the work, so with the greatest willingness he gave himself ; *for he loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it,* Eph. v. 25, 26, *and gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity,* Tit. ii. 14. From an ardent principle of love to his people, he undertook to redeem and save them. And from this principle he went thro' the work with the greatest satisfaction, whatever discouragements and ill treatment he met withal in the prosecution of it. So the Prophet describes him readily complying with his Father's will, and chearfully bearing the most reproachful usage, the highest indignities and sufferings his enemies could lay upon him, *Is. l. 5, 6. The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious*

lions, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that pluck'd off the hair : I hid not my face from shame and spitting. And himself speaks as tho' he was in an agony, till he had encounter'd the difficulties that were in his way, Luke xii, 50. I have a baptism to be baptized with (meaning the baptism of his death, in which he was sprinkled, as it were, with his own blood) and how am I straitned till it be accomplished ? As he tells his disciples, when sitting down with them to his last passover, which was as it were the prelude to his death, with desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer, Luke xxii.

15. As he saw his last sufferings coming on, he seems to pant to the goal, and would close his life with attending and dismissing one ordinance, that was designed to prefigure his death, and instituting another, that should be the standing memorial of it to the end of the world. All along he acts with utmost freedom, and with a sacred impatience girds up himself for the awful hour, and work. He was under no constraints, but those of his own love ; this first stretched him out upon the cross a willing victim, before his enemies could have any power to fasten him there. And therefore when he speaks of laying down his life, you have that ever-memorable passage, Joh. x. 17, 18. *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself :*

self: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. What, O blessed Jesus! When Judas betrayed thee, when the Jews plotted against thee, and gave thee up into the hands of the Romans, the Romans delivered thee up to execution, and the soldiers fastened thee to the accursed tree, and wounded thee with so much cruelty to the death there, Did no man take thy life from thee? But the meaning is, that tho' all these instruments concurr'd in the death of Christ, and acted their own rage and wickedness in accomplishing it, yet this did by no means intrench upon his willingness. He could easily have skreen'd himself from their rage, and disappointed their utmost malice: He lets them know what he could have done, when, with only a look, he threw down those that came to apprehend him. Or, as he told Peter, when he drew his sword in his defence, he could have prayed to his Father, who would have commanded legions of angels, with winged speed, to have come to his rescue, Mat. xxvi. 53. But when his hour was come, how willingly did he yield himself without a struggle, without a groan? He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth, Is. liii. 7. 'Tis true, he prayed earnestly, that if it was possible, the cup might pass from him; Mat. xxvi. 39. But this only shew'd the innocent reluctancies of human nature to the work of

suffer-

suffering ; nor should that, which evidenced the truth of his humanity, be construed to the disadvantage of his love to his people, or readiness to be at the divine disposal : And we know with what perfect resignation he bow'd to the divine will at last ; *nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

And as Christ freely offered himself to sufferings and death ; so,

(2.) He as gloriously revived from under them. *As he had power to lay down his life, so he had power to take it again.* His end in dying was satisfaction, and the issue a glorious resurrection. *He was put to death in the flesh, but quickned by the Spirit,* 1 Pet. iii. 18. And *declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead,* Rom. i. 4. Neither the stone that was rolled over him, nor the seal, nor the watch that was set about the grave, could imprison and confine him. *Pilate said unto them, ye have a watch, go your way, and make it as sure as you can ; so they went and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch,* Mat. xxvii 65, 66. And wilt thou indeed imprison the Lord of life and glory ? When he is to rise, the seal shall melt, the stone shall roll away, and *the keepers shall shake, and become as dead men.* And thus, as one observes, “ The method which his adversaries took to find evidence, (as they
“ thought)

“ thought) of the imposture, was by providence designed on the contrary, to become a strong proof of the truth of his resurrection ; taking away all pretence or possibility of that plausible objection, that *his disciples came by night and stole him away.*”

This great article of our faith, the resurrection of Christ, was frequently predicted under the Old Testament. The Psalmist, by the prophetick spirit, brings him in comforting himself with the assured hope and prospect of it, Psal. xvi. 9, 10. *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth ; my flesh also shall rest in hope ; for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption.* We cannot possibly be at a loss to refer this passage to the resurrection of Christ, when the Apostle *Peter* hath so expressly applied it to that as a plain prediction of it, Acts ii. 25, — 31. Our Lord speaks of the wonderful deliverance of *Jonas*, after he had lain so long in the whale’s belly, as a specimen and representation of his own resurrection, Mat. xii. 39, 40. *For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly : so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.* And as this astonishing deliverance of *Jonas* was a full proof to the *Ninevites*, that he was a prophet sent of God ; so was our Lord’s resurrection from the grave, after he had been so long buried in it, the strongest conviction that could be given *that*

generation, that he was the true *Messiah*, and as such he refers to it before hand. When the Prophet *Isaiah* had described him in all the agonies of his cross, *cut off out of the land of the living*; and *making his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death*, Isa. liii. 8, 9. He leads our faith forward to the glories of his resurrection, ver. 10. *He shall prolong his days*, revive from under the power of death in a glorious resurrection, never to die more; agreeably to what the Apostle has observed, Rom. vi. 9. *Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more*; *Death hath no more dominion over him*. And a great man * thinks that the perpetuity of that life, to which the *Messiah* was to be raised, was intimated in that farther prophesy of him, Isa. lv. 3. For God giving this promise to his people, *I will make an everlasting covenant with you*, (of which the *Messiah* to be the Mediator, and to ratify it by his death) and adding this expression, *even the sure mercies of David*, “ could signify no less
 “ than that the *Christ*, who was given first unto
 “ us in a frail and mortal condition, in which
 “ he was to die, should afterwards be given in
 “ an immutable state, and consequently that
 “ he being dead should rise unto eternal life.”
 As himself declares with great majesty and solemnity, Rev. i. 18. *I am he that liveth and was dead*; and *behold I am alive for evermore*, Amen; and *have the keys of hell and of death*.

Indeed

* *Pearson on the Creed*, p. 253.

Indeed, had Christ always remained the captive of the grave, and his life run out in an endless death, then he might have complained, and the believer might have feared, or rather there had been no sufficient foundation for our faith in him; as the Apostle observes, that *if Christ is not risen, then is our faith vain*, 1 Cor. xv. 14. But now that he hath so gloriously recovered his loss, and triumph'd over all the powers of the grave, well may the Redeemer and the redeemed rejoice together. As the angel reported with so much joy the news of his being risen to *Mary Magdalen*, and the other *Mary*, who came to make so early a visit to the sepulchre; *He is not here: for he is risen, as he said: come see the place where the Lord lay*, Mat. xxviii. 6. And how was *Thomas* filled with transport, when, through the amazing condescension of our Lord, he received such satisfying conviction of the certainty of his resurrection? *Then saith he to Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing*. This was full conviction to *Thomas*, that his Lord was risen, and risen in the same body in which he suffered and died; his unbelief gives way before it, and he receives it with answerable joy; and *Thomas answered and said unto him, my Lord and my God*, Joh. xx. 27, 28. Thus is *Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept*, 1 Cor. xv. 20. And he

is the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence, Col. i. 18. As in the virtue of his resurrection he will at last, in the most glorious manner, accomplish the resurrection of his people, as the Apostle observes, 1 Theff. iv. 14. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him : When he shall come, as the Apostle farther instances, 2 Theff. i. 10. to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. And this leads me to add,

(3.) That Christ is so far from complaining, that he counts it his honour to stand at the head of the redeemed and saved world. This is expressly said to be a branch of his main design, and to which he attended through all the labours of his cross, Rom. xiv. 9. *For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. He was Lord of all in right of creation ; for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth : All things were created by him and for him, Col. i. 16. The great Creator must be the supreme Lord of all : And in this sense he could not lose his property and dominion. But he has a new and farther claim to his people upon the foot of redemption ; he is now, as one expresses it, “ Not only the “ Lord that made us, but the Lord that bought “ us.” His own blood is the purchase-money,*
and

and by the payment of that inestimable price into the hands of divine justice, he hath recovered all that sin and Satan had snatch'd from us, and likewise acquired such an interest and right in his people, as all his redeemed will acknowledge in songs of everlasting praise. *And they sung a new song saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, Rev. v. 9.* Thus, whilst he secures the happiness of his people, he secures a vast revenue of glory to himself; *God having made that same Jesus that was crucified, both Lord and Christ, Acts ii. 36. And exalted him with his right hand, to be a prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance and forgiveness of sins, ch. v. 31.* And if we view him now in all the glories of his exalted state, how full the power with which he is invested, how bright the crown he wears, and what honour hath been put upon him in his human nature, and as Mediator, as the just reward of his obedience and death! So the Apostle fastens our eye upon him, *Heb. ii. 9. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour. And because he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee*

should bow, of things in heaven, things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, Phil. ii. 8.—

11. And, when he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high, Heb. i. 3. And, “ Who is it
 “ that is thus exalted over all? Who is thus
 “ encompassed with glory, majesty and pow-
 “ er? Who is it that sits down at the right
 “ hand of the majesty on high, all his enemies
 “ being made his footstool? Is it not he, who in
 “ this world was poor, despised, persecuted and
 “ slain? Is it not the same Jesus who loved
 “ us, and gave himself for us, and washed us
 “ in his own blood? So the Apostle told the
 “ Jews, that *the same Jesus whom they slew and*
 “ *hanged on a tree, God had exalted with his*
 “ *right hand.* — If we have any valuation
 “ of his love, if we have any concernment in
 “ what he hath done and suffered for the
 “ Church, we cannot but rejoice in his pre-
 “ sent state and glory.” *

Finally, who can tell what a shout of joy will eccho thro’ the upper world, when Christ shall ascend the mount of God at the head of his redeemed people, that glorious assembly, that great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, whom he hath washed from their sins in his own blood, and now comes to present
faultless

faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy, saying, behold, I, and the children which God hath given me? These are a Redeemer's diadem and crown, and let him wear the whole glory of their salvation. In such a way, and with such full satisfaction to himself, shall all the labours of his cross, and of his love, terminate, and in such manner shall the antient oracle be accomplish'd, Isa. liii. 11. He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied. However then it cost him such fore travel, such grievous sufferings, a gracious Redeemer never did, nor will, complain that his people are redeemed, pardoned, and saved at too dear a rate; for tho' he suffered so deeply, it was freely, and in consequence of his own choice; whilst he has recovered from all the dishonours of the grave; is invested with the highest power and glory, as the fruit and reward of his sufferings; and counts it his honour to shine out as the everlasting righteousness of his people, and the exalted head of the redeemed world, Heb. xii. 2. Who for the joy that was set before him, the joyful prospect he had of promoting the glory of God, fulfilling the counsels of divine wisdom and grace, and accomplishing the salvation of the church; endured the cross, despising the shame, cheerfully submitted to the painful and cruel death of the cross, contemning all the affronts, reproaches, and indignities his enemies could offer him; and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, be-

ing advanced, as the fruit and event of his sufferings, in equal authority, glory, and power with God, in the rule and government of all *. As the Apostle describes him in this situation in characters and circumstances of great glory, Eph. i. 20, — 23. — *Whom God hath raised from the dead, and set at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come : And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.* And when we can by faith behold the once suffering Redeemer, thus exalted and enthroned, cloth'd with his own and his Father's glory, and hastening to set the finishing hand to his work, how delightful the prospect ! how transporting ! How should we rejoice in all the honours pour'd round him ! And with what full satisfaction of soul should we cleave to him, the center of our rest and hopes, whilst, with a holy impatience, we stretch forward to that day, when *we shall see him as he is*, and all our happiness shall be perfected in the immediate and everlasting enjoyment of him ! “ BLESSED *Jesus!* we can add
 “ nothing to thee, nothing to thy glory ; but
 “ it is a joy of heart unto us, that thou art what
 “ thou art ; that thou art so gloriously exalted
 “ at the right hand of God ; and do long more
 “ fully

* See Dr. Owen on the place.

“ fully and clearly to behold that glory according to thy prayer and promise.” * And this minds me to add, that as the Redeemer does not, neither will complain, much less,

4. And *lastly*, Can the sinner, the pardoned justified sinner, complain : Complain, did I say ? This is a way of pardon and salvation he can never be enough thankful for, never enough exult and glory in. As 'tis added in the next verse to the text, *In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.* The great Apostle is all rapture when he thinks, or speaks of it. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ : according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world : Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself : In whom we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. — Yea doubtless, and I do count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord : for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him. — And God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.* What, indeed, can it be, but everlasting occasion of joy and thankfulness to the believer, when he considers the blessedness of that state

state into which he is brought, and the righteousness thro' which he is brought into, and kept in it? *Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin,* Rom. iv. 6, 7, 8. Christ's righteousness is a robe long enough to cover all our guilt, and hide all our deformities; and what is that blessing that does not go along with an interest in it? By it the law is disarmed of all its terrors, and the curse turned far away. In these garments of his elder brother, the believer has near and delightful access to God, and may plead for the blessing of the first-born; put in his claim to all the blessings of grace now, and build his hopes of greater hereafter. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith, into the grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement,* Rom. v. 1, 2, 11. To have all sin pardoned, and the curse for ever taken away; grace bestowed, and heaven ensured; to have a righteousness to apply to and trust in, thro' which we may form comfortable hopes of an interest in such blessings, and which we may plead for such purposes, what can be an equal reason for joy and thankfulness! And when this righteousness comes

comes to be seen in its full glory, with what exalted sentiments of joy, and wonder, and praise will the saint contemplate it thro' the endless ages of eternity?

How should we then adore the wisdom and grace of God in this provision and establishment of a justifying righteousness? And with what gratitude receive both it, and the blessings that stand connected with it? But I shall have a proper opportunity a little more distinctly to represent the believer's high esteem of this righteousness, his thankful acceptance of it, and joyful adherence to it, when I come, in our next discourse, to consider that disposition and tendency of soul which the church expresses towards it in our text; and therefore I enlarge no farther upon it now. It only remains to add,

VIII, and *lastly*, That the righteousness of Christ being thus made a believer's, it does and ever will remain his justifying righteousness; he needs no other, and he shall never want this. 'Tis a righteousness that in its own nature ever remains the same; the God that gave it him will never strip him of it; and in this righteousness he shall at last appear before the throne without spot, and so shine out perfectly righteous to all eternity. Under such a character the prophet *Daniel* describes it, when representing the great ends for which the *Messiah* was to be cut off, Dan. ix. 24. — *And to bring in everlasting righteousness.* 'Tis
spoken

spoken of a righteousness that Christ perfected and brought in, in consequence of his being made a sacrifice for sin, not his own sins, but the sins of the people. And this righteousness how glorious in itself, and of what everlasting efficacy?

1. 'Tis in its own nature an everlasting righteousness. The righteousness of the first *Adam* in his state of innocency was spotless and perfect in its kind; but how soon was it corrupted and destroyed by the entrance of sin? *Man being in honour continued not*; yielding to the first temptation that assaulted him, in what a dreadful manner did he fall from that first and better state in which he was created? Hereby all his righteousness was blasted at once; and what does he now entail upon his posterity, but guilt, and misery, and death? But 'tis the glory of the Redeemer's righteousness, that, as it is absolutely perfect, so 'tis everlastingly the same. Our righteousness is in safe hands, as 'twas wrought out by a glorious person: 'Tis the righteousness of God-man, of him who is truly God, as really man, what is impossible therefore should ever be tarnish'd, or have the least breach made upon it. *Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished, Is. li. 6.* When the
strongest

strongest and most durable parts of the creation shall pass away, or crumble into dust, thro' all times, and under all changes the Mediator's righteousness remains perfectly, and eternally the same. 'Tis the righteousness of him who is *the same yesterday, to day and for ever*, Heb. xiii. 8.

2. The believer possesses this righteousness as the gift of God, and he will never divest him of it. He hath provided and appointed it for our justification, and imputes it for this purpose; gives it to the soul, and justifies in and thro' it. We read *of the gift of righteousness: And the gift by grace, which is by one man Jesus Christ; and Christ is made of God unto us righteousness*. And who can disrobe the believer, whom God hath thus cloth'd with *change of raiment*? Or break in upon his state, whom God hath thus absolved and justified? As the Apostle puts the question with a holy triumph, *Rom. viii. 33. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth*. Indeed the believer's own sins are often forfeiting this righteousness, and all interest in it; they deserve that this gift should be recalled, and the pardon reversed that is built upon it. But 'tis the gift of an unchangeable God, and in that covenant, where *all the gifts and callings of God are without repentance*; and *the free gift, which is of many offences unto justification*, Rom. v. 16. In it there is

is full provision for our daily pardon, peace, and comfort. Herein it gloriously differs from that righteousness which must have been our justification in the first covenant. One sin for ever prey'd upon that ; but as our greatest guilt and unworthiness are no bar to our being interested in this, so there is in it standing and effectual provision for the pardon of our after offences. 'Tis of perpetual continuance, and everlasting efficacy ; what needs no other to be substituted in the room of it ; nor shall it be ever lost to the soul that in the way of the covenant is interested in it.

3, And *lastly*, In this righteousness the believer will appear *without spot* before the throne, and to all eternity. 'Tis true, when we come to heaven, our inherent personal holiness will be perfected ; but even then the glorified saint will never drop the righteousness of Christ, nor appear before God without it. It ascends with him, opens heaven for him, and dwells for ever round him, his most glorious covering in the sight of God, and everlasting title to all the blessings of eternity. The saints appear before the throne, as those *that have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*, Rev. vii. 14. *They are redeemed unto God by his blood ;* “ And to eternity he will “ *be the immediate head of the whole glorified* “ *creation.* God having (as a great * man ex-
“ presses

* Dr. Owen of the person of Christ, p. 368.

“ presses it) gather’d all things to an head
 “ in Christ, the knot and center of that
 “ collection shall never be dissolved. We shall
 “ never lose our relation unto him ; nor he his
 “ unto us.” To eternity Christ will be an head of
 righteousness and life to his people. He appears
a lamb as it had been slain in the midst of the
throne : In all the glories of his exalted state,
 he wears the memorials of his death and love,
 nor will he ever lay them down. *The glory of*
God doth lighten the New Jerusalem, and the
Lamb is the light thereof. ’Tis his presence
 that makes an everlasting day there ; and
 in an immediate converse and communion
 with him, how will all the happiness of eterni-
 ty be perfected ? As himself prayed for his
 people, *Father, I will that they also whom thou*
hast given me, be with me where I am ; that they
may behold my glory, Joh. xvii. 24. and made it
 the matter of his promise to them, Joh. xii. 26.
that where he is, there shall also his servant be.
 And the Apostle represents it as the upshot of
 all his hopes and views, Phil. i. 23. *Having a*
desire to depart, and to be with Christ ; which
is far better. And when the glorified saint
 comes to contemplate the happiness of his state,
 as purchased by his blood, and secured by his
 most perfect and everlasting righteousness, how
 full will his delight be in God ? With what sa-
 tisfaction will he approach him, and with what
 transporting joy mingle in the praises of them,
 who are *crying with a loud voice, Salvation to*
our

our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb? Rev. vii. 10. Now indeed we see but a little way into this mystery; and this makes our affections so cold and languishing about it. But when the believer comes to survey heaven in its united glories, and to find himself secured in the joyful possession of them all by this righteousness; that the God that gave it him, will never dispossess him of it; and that because he will never dispossess him of it, therefore he will bid him welcome to that fulness of joy that is in his presence for evermore; how will this fill him with the highest admirations of it, and engage him to all eternity to bless God for it? Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: And he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, Rev. vii. 15,——17.

Thus have I gone over this necessary and important enquiry, how that righteousness, which is *originally* and *subjectively* without us, comes to be made ours for our personal and complete justification. I have shew'd that this is by *Imputation*; and have instanced how the foundation of such *Imputation* is laid in the eternal covenant between the Father and the Son,
and

and in Christs acting, in pursuit of that covenant, in all his mediatorial undertakings as the surety and substitute of his people, fulfilling the law in their nature and room, and so bringing in everlasting righteousness, all that righteousness which they want for their full and perfect justification ; which righteousness is made theirs upon believing, according to the firm and gracious constitution of the new covenant, to the full satisfaction of all the parties concerned, and ever will abide so.

A P P L I C A T I O N.

I. What reason have we to admire the counsels of divine wisdom in the method of our pardon and salvation? The Apostle tells us, with a singular emphasis, in a passage that has been already quoted, that *it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings*, Heb. ii. 10. The redeeming, justifying and saving sinners by the obedience and death of Christ, was a design worthy of God ; worthy of him, who is the great Lord and Sovereign of all worlds, and for whose glory and service all things are ; and in the execution and accomplishment of it, how do his *wisdom, holiness and justice*, with his other adorable excellencies, shine out with full consistency, and in their highest glory? Here is no jar, no clashing nor con-

N tention

tention among them ; but they are all opened out in their mutual subserviencies, each smiling and reflecting a lustre upon the other, whilst infinite grace seems to sit supreme, and preside over all the rest. And never is the humble saint fill'd with a more admiring view of God ; with a higher awe of his supreme authority and dominion ; with a deeper veneration of his unblemished holiness, and unyielding justice, joined with the most adoring thoughts of his infinite wisdom, and attended with a humble joyful assiance in his boundless grace and mercy, than when he can take a steady survey of the harmony of all the perfections of God in this work. Here, christian, is delightful employment for thee ! *Herein God hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence*, united all the honours of his justice with the glories of his grace. These are *the things which angels are looking into* with studious intention, with the most rapturous joy and wonder ; they contemplate, adore and praise, 1 Pet. i. 12. Let this view of God affect our hearts, possess our whole souls, and fill us with still increasing delight ! We adore thee, O most gracious God, in this method of our redemption and pardon ; we revere all thy perfections, and with everlasting gratitude own our obligations to thy grace !

2. How should we be affected with the infinite condescension and love of Christ ! 'Tis by his blood we are redeemed from hell, redeemed

deemed to God, and justified ; and 'tis his most perfect obedience and righteousness, that is the foundation of all our hopes. How low did he stoop to raise us ? And to what extremest sorrows and sufferings did he submit, to bring in a righteousness for our justification ? He declined none of the duties of obedience, none of the labours of the cross ; *humbled himself to death, endured the cross, despised the shame* ; with zeal and steadiness pursued his great design, till he could say, *the things concerning me have an end* ; and in all, with what evidence and glory did his love appear ? *Ye know, says the Apostle, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich, 2 Cor. viii. 9.* As elsewhere he exhorts believers to grow and improve in the knowledge of the love of Christ ; that love, whose full dimensions we can never hope to comprehend, Eph. iii. 17, 18, 19, *that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.* If we are christians indeed, and know any thing of the gospel, we must know something of this. His love is wrote in characters of blood, and his grace is stamp'd upon every line and blessing of the gospel. How low and mean the nature he assumed ; and in that nature, through what a series of sorrows and sufferings did he pass ! And all *for our sakes*, and

to effect our redemption; *for our sakes*, and to effect the redemption and salvation of such sinners as we are. Astonishing thought! *While we were yet sinners Christ died for us*; and *when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*. What matchless and unequall'd love is this! To die for sinners, those that were wicked and ungodly; not for friends, but for enemies, and to make them friends; "Had not God said it, and the scripture reveal'd it, who, says one *, would have believ'd our report?" But this is the great mystery and endearment of a Redeemer's love; to bear the weight of his Father's wrath, and open his bosom to all the strokes of his justice; to be rent and torn, broken and bruised to the death; to do and submit to this, for such sinners as we are, and that we might be redeem'd, pardon'd, and sav'd; if we see nothing of the love of Christ in this, or nothing in this love that is wonderful, it is because sin and unbelief have blinded our minds, and hardened our hearts.

3. How should we revere that law, which Christ hath paid such a regard to! What honour hath God put upon the law, and how hath he magnified it in the death of his Son! When made of a woman, he was made under the law; and when fulfilling a righteousness for the sinner's justification, what a perfect obedience does he pay down to it in its precept, and

* Mr. Ambrose.

and in its penalty, and in its fullest extent ? The law abates him nothing : and can we see it pursuing him through all its curses, and emptying down all its stores of vengeance upon his head, and not learn to revere this law, and with holy awe bow before it ? 'Tis of supreme authority, and indispensable obligation. Let us learn to keep up high and honourable thoughts of it. If we give into debasing thoughts of the law, every thing in the death of Christ, and in the grace of the gospel, will soon lose its glory with us. And how vain is it to hope to be justified in any way that shall weaken and undermine the authority, and obligations of it ? Let us then study the law, and labour after a closer and more spiritual acquaintance with it : Study it in its extent and spirituality, and pray to God to bring our hearts more fully under the awe and authority of it. This would lay us low at the foot of mercy, and beat us off from all our vain and false confidences ; quicken us in our applications to the Lord Jesus Christ, and fill our hearts with the highest value for his righteousness and grace.

4thly, and *lastly* : Of what infinite importance must an interest in this righteousness be ! 'Tis a glorious righteousness, and when proposed in the gospel for our acceptance, challenges our highest esteem and most thankful regards. 'Tis every way complete and perfect ; what neither law nor justice can form any exception against. 'Tis an everlasting right-

teousness; what never shall be succeeded by the provision of any other; and, when upon the soul by faith, and according to the gracious constitution of the new covenant, shall never be taken from it. In one word, 'tis the great gift and blessing of that covenant, that is *everlasting, ordered in all things, and sure*; suitable to our wants, and all-sufficient for our relief; of standing credit with the Father, and of everlasting avail. Shall we not then receive it with utmost thankfulness, and bid it welcome, the Redeemer and his righteousness welcome? Rest all our dependance upon it; and living and dying desire to be found in it. “Those whose happiness is bound up in Christ’s righteousness and salvation, will have the comfort of it, when time and days shall be no more *.”

* Henry on Is. li.

S E R M O N V.

ISAIAH xlv. former part of the 24th
verse.

*Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have
I righteousness.*

WE have hitherto been engaged in two
necessary and important enquiries ;
what that righteousness is which we
have in Christ ; and how this righteousness,
which is originally and subjectively without us,
comes to be made ours for our actual and per-
sonal justification. Let us now proceed,

Thirdly, To trace out that tendency and dis-
position of soul which believers express and dis-
cover towards this righteousness, copying them
from the sentiments and language of the
church in this remarkable passage ; *Surely shall
one say*, every one say that is taught of God, and
according to the different degrees of light in
which this truth is set to view — *In the Lord
have I righteousness* ; there I seek and hope to
find it, and there *only* — only and exclusive-
ly of all other persons and things whatever *.
And,

1. This language must include some knowledge of it, what it is, and the purposes for which it serves: *In the Lord have I righteousness*; then, that Lord whose this righteousness is, and who was appointed of God to work it out, and hath wrought it out, together with the excellency and advantages of this righteousness, and the way in which it may be made ours; these are things that must, in some degree or other, be known, as they lie at the root of all saving faith, and without which it can't discharge some of its most essential operations. Hence faith in Christ is described by the knowledge of him, If. liii. 11. To believe in an unknown Christ, to rest our souls for pardon and life upon one whom we know not who, nor whence he is, nor what his work, what can be more monstrous and absurd? As the Apostle puts the question, Rom. x. 14. *How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* A building may as well stand without a foundation to support it, as faith in Christ subsist and be acted without some knowledge of him.

When therefore this righteousness is desired and sought after, the eye of the soul is open'd to

* Pertinet huc emphasis Phrasios, qua dicit, *esse illam justitiam in Jehovah*: h. e. esse bonum ejus, bonum proprium, ab ipso quæsitum & paratum; in ipso quærendum, quod extra ipsum non invenitur. Non itaque esse in homine, quippe qui hoc jure per peccatum excidit; aut in operibus legis, ad cujus jus postulatumque explendum *caro inepta est*; neque etiam in victimis & sacrificiis legalibus, aut in superstitionis *θελοθησκείας* commentis. *Vitringa* in locum.

to see Christ working it out. This is what he had in view, when fulfilling all obedience in his life; this is the great design he was carrying on, when completing his obedience in his death; as it was with this view, that the Father charged him with the sins of his people, and pour'd upon him all that wrath that was due to them. Thus did the Son, by the will and appointment of the Father, engage in this blessed design, and do and suffer all that was necessary to make him the Saviour of sinners, and their righteousness before God. And these are some of the great things which the Spirit reveals, and, with some measure of evidence, represents to the soul, when he comes to *convince of righteousness*, and lead the sinner into a saving knowledge of Christ and his righteousness.

'Tis, indeed, impossible to make that the object of our attention and esteem which we have no knowledge of; and tho' the revelation of this righteousness was not alike clear and explicit thro' all the periods of the church, yet we have plentiful evidence, that the Old Testament saints were far from being without some notices of it, and such as were sufficient to found their faith in it. The first promise that was made to *Adam* immediately after the fall, carried in it some intimations hereof, Gen. iii. 15. 'Tis, indeed, impossible for us to say what measure of light might go along with this promise; but as it was designed of God as a proper relief for our first parents, under a sense of that misery

fery

fery, in which they had involved themselves, and their posterity, by the guilt of the fall, it must point them forward to some future atonement, or method of restoration, to be effected by the *seed of the woman*, as in his sufferings, and *being bruised*, they were assured of a noble victory over satan, the great instrument and author of their ruin. * By *faith* Abel offered unto God a more excellent and acceptable sacrifice than Cain, Heb. xi. 4, which must necessarily be understood of faith in a Mediator, for no other faith can support the great things that are said of faith in that chapter.

When

* As 'tis generally supposed with a great deal of reason, that the skins of those beasts, with which God clothed Adam and Eve after the fall, were the skins of beasts that were slain by his appointment, to be offered in sacrifice; 'tis exceeding probable, that by means hereof our first parents might have some notion given them, that that restoration, which they were to expect by the *seed of the woman*, was to be effected by some future sacrifice in his death. And as the *nakedness* of our first parents was thus covered by garments made of the skins of sacrificed beasts, might not this give them some (however dark and imperfect, yet some) intimation of the necessity of having their guilt, their *moral nakedness*, cover'd by a righteousness that should arise from the death of that sacrifice, of which these sacrifices were but types. An admirable writer has given a hint that looks this way. "Ex spoliis mortalitatis, & exuviis macularum animantium teguntur corpora protoplastorum. Vestis gratiæ, qua corpus peccati tegitur, ex ipsa morte Christi est; neque sine illius mortis interventu constare potest justitia illa, quæ acceptos nos facit Deo." Or if this should be thought carrying the matter too far, I conclude at least, that Dr. *Lightfoot's* observation is as just as 'tis beautiful, That "God taught Adam the rite of sacrifice, to lay Christ dying before his eyes in a visible figure: And with the skins of the sacrificed beasts God teacheth him and his wife to cloath their bodies. And thus the first thing that dieth in the world is Christ in a figure." Vol. I. p. 692.

When *Lamech*, upon occasion of the birth of *Noah*, cried out with so much joy, *This same shall comfort us concerning our work, and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed*, Gen. v. 29. What appears plain upon the face of this passage, is, that he lived in full expectation of some person to be born into the world, by whom the curse of the fall was to be removed, and the blessings forfeited by sin restored. And upon what could he found such expectation, but the promise that God had made to *Adam*, of a restoration of blessings by the *seed of the woman*? And as these words were spoken by him, under the influence of the prophetick spirit, I can't but think, that he was looking forward through this restorer of the world to him, who was to be the *Saviour* of it; and consequently, that the blessings here spoken of were considered by him, as pledges and earnest of greater blessings to be accomplish'd in due time: And some have thought, not improbably, that the reason why he gave his Son so significant a name at his birth (*Noe* signifying in *Hebrew* *rest*, or *consolation*) was, because he foresaw that *he* was to descend from him, who was to be the true *rest*, and *consolation* of his people. See Mat. xi. 28. Luke ii. 25. Admitting these things, which seem to be attended with as much evidence as can well be expected in so dark a period, we shall have a plain instance of the unfolding the first promise, and of faith acted in it for

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liverance above a thousand years after it was given, as *Lamech* upon the birth of his son raises his faith and hope, with the nearer prospect of the full accomplishment of it. *

And when after the flood, God renews his covenant with *Noah*, Gen. ix. 9. However, at first view this covenant may be thought to contain only promises of temporal blessings, yet nothing can be more plain than that they were promises of blessings grafted upon a covenant of grace ; and that this was such a covenant, will appear by comparing Gen. ix. 11. with Is. liv. 9, 10. and Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21, 25. where the covenant of grace is described by a manifest allusion to the covenant made with *Noah*. And when God set the rainbow in the clouds as a token of that covenant, and for the confirmation of his faith in the promises of it, what does this but shew him revealing himself in his milder glories, and appearing to the world more openly in a covenant of peace and friendship, than he had ever done before? Hence it is that we find Christ himself, as managing the affairs of the church (for him we are to understand by the *mighty angel* in that august vision, Rev. x. 1.) *cloathed with a cloud, and a rainbow on his head*, an emblem of that covenant which God had made with him as head of the church ; as with regard to his appearing in the same covenant God himself is represented with the same emblems about his throne, Rev. iv. 3.

as,

* See *Alix's* reflections upon the Scripture, Vol. I. p. 60.

as, most certainly, it was upon the foot of this covenant that God accepted *Noah*, and his sacrifice, Gen. viii. 21. God having made such a covenant with him before the flood, Gen. vi. 18. I shall only crave leave to add, that when one Apostle describes *Noah* as a *preacher of righteousness*, 2 Pet. ii. 5. and another as *an heir of the righteousness which is by faith*, Heb. xi. 7. what less can this intimate to us, than that he had some knowledge of the way of justification by the righteousness of Christ, as he was himself possessed of a justifying righteousness by faith in him? *

Abraham had a yet more open and explicit revelation of the method of pardon and justification by the righteousness and death of Christ: *He rejoiced to see his day*, the day of his incarnation and death: *and he saw it and was glad*, Joh. viii. 56. The scripture expressly says, *that he believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*, Rom. iv. 3. and the great promise that God had made him, Gen. xii. 3.

that

* See Bishop *Sherlock's* Use and Intent of prophesy, Disc. IV. which is well worth the perusal of any who would see how the work of Redemption was gradually opened out during this period, and the hope of deliverance *by the seed of the woman* kept up on the foot of the first promise; though I cannot but think, that some hints, that are to be met with in that valuable performance, may be carried much farther than has been done by this excellent writer himself. Upon the whole, (to use this author's words, when speaking of the faith of *Job* as to another point) I shall be easily persuaded, that *Noah* did not enter into all the niceties relating to this point of justification by the righteousness of Christ; yet, after what has been observed, I shall not easily believe he was wholly ignorant of it.

that in him all nations should be blessed, the Apostle represents as containing in it the particular doctrine of justification by faith, and, indeed, as being an abridgement of the whole gospel, Gal. iii. 8. As upon the account of their being justified in the same way with him, he describes all true believers, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, as his spiritual seed, and him as the *father of us all*, Rom. iv. 16.

Job clearly saw the necessity of a *day's-man*, *that might lay his hand upon both parties*, and, by his interposition, make up the breach that his sins had made between God and him, ch. ix. 33. And then is he comforted under all the sorrows and distresses of his present state, when he can fix his eye upon a living redeemer, who, in due time, should accomplish a glorious salvation for him, ch. xix. 25—27. *For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.* I know that some learned interpreters are willing to understand this passage of *Job's* restoration to his former temporal prosperity; but as it does not appear that *Job*, in his then circumstances, had any prospect of such restoration; and as 'tis usher'd in, in the two preceding verses, with a solemnity that shows his

his eye was fixed upon something of much greater importance than any restoration to worldly prosperity could possibly be, there seems to be no manner of room to understand it in any other sense than as expressive of *Job's* faith in the doctrine of the resurrection, together with the pleasing expectation of his own resurrection to be accomplished by his living and gracious Redeemer *. And when *Elibu*, who had discovered such excellent sentiments of religion in the debate between *Job* and his friends, comes to view God as *having found a ransom*, appointed a way of *atonement* and redemption, how is this with him the great relief and security, with respect to deliverance from that *pit* of destruction, into which sin hath brought us? ch. xxxiii. 23, 24.

The numerous sacrifices under the *Mosaical* dispensation, that were so great a part of the worship of the *Jewish* church, were purposely designed to assist faith in looking forward to the great atonement for sin in the death of Christ, as they all derived their efficacy from it, and had their proper accomplishment in it. Hence the Apostle perpetually describes the several rites and usages of the *Jewish* law, as contain-

* See II^d Dissertation in Bishop *Sherlock's* Use and Intent of prophecy, where that learned writer hath fully justified this sense of the passage. I would only crave leave to add, that *Job*, at that time, was so far from having any comfortable prelates of a restoration to his former prosperous state in the world, that we meet with some of his bitterest complaints after this. See particularly, ch. 30. ver. 19, 20, 21, 22, &c.

containing the figure and image of good things to come, the more perfect blessings, that were to be bestowed under the gospel-dispensation, Col. ii. 17. Heb. x. i. And besides these sacrifices, which were, as I was saying, the stated and most solemn part of the worship of the *Jewish* church, they had several occasional institutions under that dispensation, which were very significant representations of the death of Christ in the main strokes of it, and of the way of salvation by him. What was their *Passover*, the sacred and standing memorial of their deliverance from *Egypt*, but an eminent type of the *lamb slain from the foundation of the world*; whose blood shed upon the cross, and sprinkled upon conscience, is our only protection from wrath, and means of deliverance from that destruction to which sin has exposed us? The Apostle plainly intimates its respect and reference to the death of Christ in this view of it, when he tells us, 1 Cor. v. 7. *that Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.* The *Manna*, by which that people was fed in the wilderness, and which was in such a miraculous manner rained down from heaven, what a lively emblem was it of him, who is *the living bread which came down from heaven: who gave his flesh for the life of the world, and whose flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed*; that is, in whose sufferings and death we have that provided and exhibited, which is the true food and life of our souls! Joh. vi.

51---55. When the rock in the wilderness, upon its being smote by the rod of *Moses*, yielded its plenteous refreshing streams, what a representation of Christ's being smote by the rod of divine justice, so opening out a way in his death for the communication of every spiritual and saving blessing? *For they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them: and that rock was Christ*, 1 Cor. x. 4. Our Lord has sufficiently explained the design of that wonderful institution of the brazen serpent, that was erected upon a pole in the wilderness, by looking to which, every one that was bit by the fiery serpent was cured and healed, Joh. iii. 14, 15. *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have eternal life.* Thus did God teach the church in that day by types and figures, and sensible representations, all of which pointed forward to the great blessings of pardon and salvation by the death of Christ, and faith therein. And tho' it can't be said, that the most exact correspondence of types with their anti-types is of itself a sufficient proof of the truth of any doctrine, yet 'tis sufficient for what I alledge it for, which is only to shew, that God was in that period carrying on the design, which he had opened out from the beginning, of effecting redemption and salvation by the promised *Messiah* and Saviour, and gradually training up the church in the knowledge

and hope of it. And tho' it can't be supposed, that the generality of the *Jews* were instructed into the distinct and full meaning of those types and figures, yet they had such a knowledge of their meaning, as was sufficient to found their reliance and trust in him, and in the mercy of God in and thro' him. So true is what our Lord told the *Jews*, Joh. v. 46. that if *they had believed Moses, they would have believed him: for he wrote of him.*

The Psalmist speaks with growing evidence of the dignity and efficacy of the priesthood of Christ; describes him in some of the most minute circumstances of his sufferings and death; and, upon a view of the insufficiency of all the legal sacrifices, shews him coming with delight *to do the will of God*, and clothed with a proper human body, that he might offer up that perfect sacrifice, which was so much wanted. And when he was himself, upon a particular and very distressing occasion, pleading that God would *purge him with hyssop, and he should be clean: wash him, and he should be whiter than snow*, Psal. li. 7. * What is he but

* 'Tis, I think, plain, beyond all possible exception, that the *Psalmist* is here looking farther than any methods of purgation that were appointed under the ceremonial law. For, (1.) under that law there were no methods of purgation appointed for those sins, which lay with such weight upon his conscience, and for the pardon of which he expresses such an anxious concern, as himself acknowledges, ver. 16. And (2.) if there had been any sacrifices appointed under the law for such sins, what were this to the purifying and pacifying conscience, the great things the *Psalmist* was reaching after, when 'tis certain, the several

but looking after an interest in the virtue and efficacy of that blood, which, in the appointed time, was to be shed for the expiation of sin; the *blood of sprinkling*, as 'tis called, Heb. xii. 24. to which all the sacrifices under the law had respect and relation, and *which cleanseth from all sin*, 1 Joh. i. 7? And when the Apostle comes to give us a comment upon the faith of this eminent Old Testament saint, as to the particular doctrine of justification, he speaks of it in such terms, as plainly shew he was far from being a stranger either to the righteousness itself, by which we are justified, or the way of being interested in it. Rom. iv. 6, 7, 8. compared with Psal. xxxii. 1.

The prophet *Isaiah*, the evangelist of the *Jewish* church, as one calls him *, describes him, *wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, making his soul an offering for sin*, and by his knowledge, as *God's righteous servant, justifying many*. *Jeremiah* gives it out

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veral sacrifices and purifications under the law, *only sanctified to the purifying of the flesh*? When therefore he prays that *God would purge him with hyssop*, &c. 'tis as if he had said, " Oh, " do thou, by that precious blood sprinkled upon my soul by " a true faith, (which was and is figured by the legal aspersions) " cleanse me from mine iniquities; so shall I be pure and innocent in thy sight; wash me in that all-sufficient laver of the " blood of my saviour, so shall I be whiter than snow before " thee." As the pious and learned Bishop *Hall* hath paraphrased the words. This is undoubtedly the sense of this passage; upon which account *Luther* used to call this one of the *Pauline* Psalms, as evidently containing the same doctrine of justification that is taught by that apostle in his epistles.

* Dr. *South*.

as his most glorious, most amiable name, *the Lord our righteousness*. Daniel sets him to view in the same point of light; *cut off, but not for himself; making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in everlasting righteousness*. Micah raises the hope and attention of the church with the prospect of him, who should be *their peace* in the worst of times. *Habakkuk* shows *the just living by faith*, that is, trusting in the grace and promise of God for every blessing they want; which the Apostle refers to and explains, as containing in it the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, without the deeds of the law. *Haggai* represents him as *the desire of all nations*; but how could he be, upon a higher account, the desire and expectation of the nations, than as he was to accomplish those blessings, that were so essential to the happiness of a lost world, and all the hopes of it? The prophet *Zechariah* describes him *the fellow of the Lord of Hosts*, yet *smote* by the sword of justice, and *removing the iniquity of the land in one day*: and *in that day opening a fountain for sin, and for uncleanness*, in which guilty and polluted sinners may wash and be clean. The last inspired writer of the Old Testament speaks of him as *the messenger of the covenant, the Lord whom they sought, who should suddenly come to his temple; the sun of righteousness, that should arise with healing in his wings*. With such care and evidence did God continue the notices of the sufferings and death of Christ, and of
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our justification and salvation thereby, through all the periods of the *Jewish* church.

Hence it was that he, the long expected and promised saviour, was no sooner born into our world, but good old *Simeon* embraced him with so much transport, as the *Salvation of God*; and *Anna* the Prophetess speaks of him with equal joy *to all that looked for redemption in Israel*, Luke ii. 30, 38. *To him*, says the Apostle *Peter*, *gave all the Prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believed in him should receive remission of sins*, Act. x. 43. and *all the Prophets testified before-hand of the sufferings of Christ*, 1 Pet. i. 11. And the Apostle *Paul*, when making his apology before *Agrippa* for the doctrine he preached, tells him, *that he preached none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer*--Act. xxvi. 22, 23. And yet more fully in the language of the text, when describing the righteousness by which guilty sinners are justified, he calls it *a righteousness without the law*, but which *was witnessed by the law and that prophets*, i. e. the same righteousness which the several writings of the Old Testament gave their agreeing testimony unto, Rom. iii. 21. And our Lord, after his resurrection, when explaining to his disciples the nature and end of his sufferings and death, how does he trace them thro' all the scriptures of the Old Testament? first to the two who were going to *Emaus*, Luk. xxiv.

25--27. *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? and beginning at Moses, and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself.* Afterwards to the eleven, when assembled together, ver. 44--47. of the same chapter.---*Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations.* This was the great, the favourite point, in which all the lines of the Old Testament meet, that thro' Christ, and by faith in him there should be a way opened out for the pardon of sin and salvation of sinners. The intention of prophecy appears plain, all along, to give out and preserve the notices of this capital and important truth.

I have been the longer in explaining and representing this, because 'tis what spreads a glory over the whole dispensation of the Old Testament, and lends us so much assistance towards understanding the sacred writings of it. And, upon laying the whole evidence together, I can't but think that 'tis clear as the sun at noon-day, that the doctrine of pardon and salvation by the death of Christ, and faith therein, is no new doctrine, but what God hath been teaching, and training up the church in the knowledge of, from the beginning. No wonder then,

then, to see the church, in our text, professing her faith in Christ in such terms as must imply some knowledge of him and his righteousness: She knew what this righteousness was, in whom she had it, and the saving purposes that were intended to be served by it.

And such knowledge of the nature of this righteousness is attended,

2. With a close and pressing sense of our great need and want of it; and this farther influences into this remarkable strain, *Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness.* The awakened, convinced sinner clearly sees that he has no righteousness of his own equal to his guilt, and sufficient for his justification and acceptance before God. He sees the purity and perfection of the law which he hath broken, and how unable he is to answer it in its high and unyielding demands. He sees what a holy, just and righteous God he has to deal withal; a God that is of *purser eyes than to behold iniquity*, and has declared *he will by no means clear the guilty.* The spirit that discovers the authority and purity of the law, and the holiness, righteousness and majesty of God, at the same time *convinces of sin*, unbowels its guilt and evil, and breaks in upon the sinner's conscience with a feeling sense of the misery of that state, into which he has brought himself by his manifold and aggravated transgressions. And when the mind is laid under the power of such impressions and convicti-

ons, as these, what will the next language be?
 “ I see I must have a better righteousness than my
 “ own, or I am for ever lost and miserable ; I
 “ *have sinned, and what shall I do unto thee, O*
 “ *thou preserver of men ? I can’t answer a holy*
 “ and righteous God *one of a thousand* : I owe
 “ ten thousand talents, and have nothing to
 “ pay : which way soever I look, my sins, like
 “ an armed host, surround me, and justice, like
 “ an enraged enemy, pursues me ; nor have I
 “ any righteousness of my own, to which I
 “ may retreat, and in which I may trust with
 “ safety. *What then shall I do when God riseth*
 “ *up, and when he visiteth, what shall I answer*
 “ *him ?* ” The spirit in his convictions, and
 when doing his work in truth, represents these
 things with evidence, and imprints them upon
 the heart with power ; fastens the eye of the
 soul upon them, and so awakens it to a serious
 and thorow consideration of the danger and
 misery of its state ; thus the sinner is brought to
 a holy despair in himself, and in every thing but
 the alone righteousness of the mediator, and the
 boundless grace of God in and thro’ him : and
 thus he is disposed in good earnest to look to
 that suitable and all-sufficient relief, which the
 Gospel hath provided.

And it ever will be found, that the warmer
 and more pressing the sense is, which we have
 of our own guilt, and the insufficiency of our
 own righteousness, the higher that of the Re-
 deemer will stand in our esteem, and with the
 more

more ardor we shall press after an interest in it. What will not absolute necessity do? And when in myself I am nothing but guilt, what have I to trust in, but the free grace of God, and the righteousness of him, *who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth?* Hence,

3. The soul is filled with earnest and ardent breathings after an interest in this righteousness; and this seems to be farther intimated in the language of the church concerning it. The soul will now arise and seek a justifying righteousness, where it is to be had, and where it sees it only is to be had. It dreads nothing more than the thoughts of appearing before God in any righteousness of its own. It sees its own best obedience is many ways lame and defective, its purest duties mingled with much sin, and its most sprightly graces deadened with much corruption; that there is nothing therefore in any righteousness of its own, on which it may rest its hopes for pardon and eternity; its great desire therefore is, that it may *win Christ, and be found in him*, and be clothed upon with the infinitely pure and spotless robe of his righteousness. As the Apostle has admirably represented the warm out-going and tendency of his soul this way, Philip. iii. 8, 9. *That I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ,*

Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

And who that sees in a clear and affecting light the absolute need of such a righteousness, and has had an engaging discovery of its excellency, suitableness and glory, will not seek after an interest in it? will not deal with God in humble fervent prayer about it? press after it, and plead with an holy importunity, that he may not be sent empty away? In the spirit of *Jacob*, when wrestling with the Angel, *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me; except thou thus bless me: "What wilt thou give me, if I go Christless? and where are my hopes for eternity, if I am sent away without an interest in him?"* There is a hungry and thirsting after righteousness; as our Lord represents in this the temper and disposition of those who are acquainted with the grace of the Gospel, and shall be filled with the blessings of it, *Mat. v. 6. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.* And so the great invitation of the Gospel runs, *Is. lv. 1, 2. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Harken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good; and let your soul delight itself in fatness. The*
blessings

blessings of the Gospel are proposed for the sinner's acceptance, as the gifts of the freest grace, and at the same time as what are most suited to his necessity and wants, the true food and support of the soul; and how should this enkindle in our bosoms earnest and ardent breathings after them, secretly and powerfully draw out every desire, and center our regards upon them, as what nothing should content and satisfy us without an interest in? So we are directed, Mat. vi. 33. *first*, that is, in preference to every thing else, and with the warmest concern of mind, *to seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness*. The soul that sees itself guilty and perishing, and is awakened to a due concern about its state, can't live without a justifying righteousness, without the righteousness of Christ. It would be glad to know the way in which it may gain it; every discovery of it is attended to with pleasure; and that would be a blessed day, a blessed discovery, that should bring it near to view, and assist a feeble faith in its actings towards it. Hence farther,

4. In that frame and disposition of soul, which believers bear and discover towards this righteousness, there is a chearful acceptance of it. The soul bids it welcome, and throws open the everlasting doors to make room for it; It would gladly lay claim to it; and whilst it desires to be interested in it, shall it not receive it with all the regards of faith and love,

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and entertain it with the most affectionate esteem?

The wise merchant, that had found *the pearl of great price*, nothing would content him, but making it his own, Mat. xiii. 45, 46. The soul that has had a real discovery of his own need of Christ, and of his superior excellency and glory, will be restless, and still in motion, till it can secure an interest in him; and every overture which the Gospel makes of him, and of the grace of God in and through him, will be entertained with answerable readiness and joy. “ Every thing in him is lovely and necessary. The man needs all, and is glad of all; whereupon he opens to him, and joyfully entertains him, as Prophet, Priest, and King *;” applies to him, and bids him welcome, in his entire character. There is nothing in his offices, but what it subscribes to, and approves of; whilst in a particular manner it gladly accepts of his righteousness, as most directly suited to the distress and misery of its case. And this is what the compilers of that admirable catechism, commonly called the *Assemblies larger Catechism*, seem to have had in their eye, when they give us the following description of faith in answer to the question, *what is justifying faith?* “ Justifying faith is a saving grace wrought in the heart of a sinner by the spirit and word of God, whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery,

“ and

* Mr. Nat. Taylor's practical discourse of Faith, p. 35.

“ and of the disability in himself, and all other
 “ creatures to recover him out of his lost con-
 “ dition, not only assenteth to the truth of the
 “ promise of the Gospel, but receiveth and
 “ resteth upon Christ and his righteousness
 “ therein held forth, for the pardon of sin,
 “ and for the accepting and accounting of his
 “ person righteous in the sight of God for sal-
 “ vation.”

Agreeably to this description of faith, we find it represented in scripture——by looking unto Christ; Is. xlv. 20. *Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth.* As the Israelite, when wounded by the biting of the fiery flying serpent, was to look to the brazen one for healing, so must we, when wounded to the death by sin, look to the Lord Jesus Christ for pardon, healing and life.——by flying to him; Heb. vi. 18. *Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.* Faith is the soul's flight to Christ for protection from the curse of the law and the wrath of God, as the man-slayer under the law fled to the city of refuge, that he might be out of the reach of the avenger of blood, that was pursuing him.——By laying hold of him; *or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me,* Is. xxvii. 5. There is in believing a laying hold of, and laying claim to Christ, as in whom our peace with God is made; the soul stirs up itself to this, and

and would transact all with God for pardon and peace, upon the foot of an interest in him.—— To the same purpose the Apostle speaks of apprehending Christ, with a special eye to the obtaining an interest in him for pardon and justification, Philip. iii. 12. *But I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*——Finally, by receiving him; *But to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name,* Joh. i. 12. In the Gospel Christ is proposed to our acceptance; and this is believing, when the soul accepts of that grace, which is exhibited and tendered in and thro' him. So we read of *receiving the atonement in his blood*, Rom. v. 11. and of *receiving abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness in him*, Rom. v. 17. True faith is indifferent and unconcerned about nothing in Christ's office or character; but in its first applications to him, when under a sense of guilt and dread of wrath, it especially eyes his death and righteousness for pardon and life. 'Tis the inmost language of faith, *surely in the Lord have I righteousness* for this; here it rests, lays the weight and stress of its everlasting concerns, and finds suitable and divine relief. Hence,

5. As the acceptance of Christ's righteousness is always accompanied with an humble and entire dependance of soul upon it; this likewise must be included in that disposition which the
God

church expresses towards it: *surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness.* The soul in its dependancies is brought to a point, and here it will lean all its hopes. It has been labouring, as in the fire, *to establish a righteousness of its own*, something on which it may build for eternity; in the righteousness of Christ it sees that on which it may so build, a rock that shall never crumble under it. *He is the end of the law for righteousness:* The righteousness that is in him is complete and perfect; God hath declared his acceptance and approbation of it; we may safely venture our dearest interests upon this bottom; nor need we any other, if we are seeking an interest in this, in the way that the Gospel hath appointed. As the Apostle hath represented the different success of *Jew and Gentile* in the difference of the way of their seeking righteousness, Rom. ix. 30, 31, 32. *What shall we say then? that the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith: But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.* Where justification is not sought in a way of believing, it can never be obtained: but where sought by faith, how does the soul go out of every thing in itself, whilst its entire dependance is upon the righteousness of Christ, and the grace of God in and
through

through him; and this is the only appointed way of obtaining justification.

And this I take to be the proper vital act of that faith which is justifying. 'Tis the soul's receiving Christ's righteousness as our only plea for pardon, and building upon it as our only foundation for acceptance unto life: 'Tis the soul's closure with him as the only saviour, and such an acceptance of his righteousness as is attended with an humble and fixed dependance upon it. For this purpose he is exhibited in the Gospel, and for this purpose faith receives him, trusts in him, and leans all the stress of its eternal hopes upon him.

And this will help explain the famous doctrine of the reformation concerning *justification by faith alone*. Not that faith itself is our justifying righteousness, either in whole or in part *. In itself 'tis weak and imperfect, like as other graces, and pleads no merit of its own. 'Tis the glory of faith, that it unhinges the soul of all dependance upon every thing in self. 'Tis a self-emptying grace. It knows it can do nothing separate from the righteousness of Christ, its great and most glorious object; and therefore it receives and rests upon that. *We put on the Lord Jesus Christ by faith*, Rom. xiii. 14. Faith applies to Christ, and unites the soul unto him; seeks in him all it wants, and trusts alone in the pardoning mercy of God thro' him. Here is the center and dependance of

* See above p. 51.

of faith ; and thus the soul comes to be clothed upon with his righteousness. As the Father said concerning the Prodigal upon his return, *bring forth the best robe, and put it on*, Luke xv. 22. This best robe Christ hath wrought out, the Spirit applies, and faith receives.

And this gives us the true and easy sense of those passages, in which we read *of being justified by faith*, and *that faith is counted for righteousness*, and the like. The plain and obvious meaning of which I take to be, that we are justified by that righteousness, which is the great and peculiar object of faith ; that righteousness, which faith receives, and on which it rests, is made ours in a way of believing, or imputed to us for our justification. I know what pains have been taken to represent this interpretation as ridiculous and absurd, and how many prejudices have been raised against it : But as it has fallen so unavoidably in my way, I can't but briefly suggest a few things in support of it. And

1st, I would observe, that this way of expounding these phrases is very agreeable to the phraseology of scripture upon other occasions. Nothing more common there than to put the act for the object, the act as in us for the object on which it terminates. So *Jacob* is said *to swear by the fear of his father Isaac*, that God that was the object of his fear, and is the only object of all religious fear, Gen.

xxx. 53. And *God* is said to be *the hope of Israel*, Jer. xiv. 8. and Christ is expressly called *our hope*, 1 Tim. i. 1. and we are said *to be saved by hope*, Rom. viii. 24. which cannot be understood of hope as a grace in us, for the Apostle describes it as *a hope that is not seen*, is not yet in hand; must therefore be meant of the object of hope, either Christ himself, or the promise of grace in and thro' him. And again, Believers are said *to fly for refuge, to lay hold of the hope set before them*, Heb. vi. 18. Hope here is put for the object of hope. "But" then this may be differently taken, and import either the happiness which is the matter of our hope, or the person in whom we place our hope; which is most probable. Christ therefore is here meant by the hope set before us."* We see by these instances, to which many others might easily be added, that nothing is more common in scripture than to put the act for the object on which it terminates: and 'tis but supposing such an easy figure of speech, and the plain sense opens before us of the texts under debate.

2dly, This way of expounding these passages maintains a clear and full distinction between
tween

* Mr *Pierce* gives a good reason why by *hope* here can't well be understood the happiness which is the matter of our hope; because of that expression, *which entereth into that within the veil*; for then the sense would run thus, "we have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope of heaven, which hope of heaven is entred into heaven;" which is manifestly absurd. *Vide in locum.*

tween justification by faith and by works, which the Apostle states so carefully, and which must be everlastingly maintained. In this way of explaining the doctrine of justification by faith, the righteousness of Christ bears all the glory, and works are for ever excluded, as they ought to be, and are by the Apostle; and faith it self concurs no farther, than as by that we receive and apply that righteousness by and for which we are justified: Whereas, in every other way of explaining this doctrine, works are brought in as co-operating with faith; or rather faith is consider'd as including repentance, love, new-obedience, and good works of every sort.

3dly, Another reason that I would offer for this way of expounding the texts under consideration, is, that it falls in with the natural and undoubted sense of those other passages, in which we are said *to be justified by the blood of Christ*, Rom. v. 9. and *to be made righteous by the obedience of Christ*, Rom. v. 19. and where he is said *to be made of God unto us righteousness*, 1 Cor. i. 30, &c. The blood, the obedience, and righteousness of Christ, are the foundation and matter of our justification, that for which we are justified: These we receive by faith, and so, according to the grand establishment of the gospel, God imputes them to us, or we are interested in them for our justification. How easy this sense, and how consistent does it

make the Apostle's way of expressing himself throughout! But those that oppose this interpretation, what do they offer in the room of it? They tell us, that God hath, in consideration of the sufferings and death of Christ, discharged us from the first covenant, which required perfect obedience as the condition of our justification, and in the room thereof brought in another law or covenant more suited to the weakness of our fallen state, in which we are justified, not by the righteousness of Christ, but by our own sincere, tho' imperfect obedience. But is this giving the natural and genuine sense of those passages, where we are said *to be justified by the blood of Christ, and to be made righteous by the obedience of Christ*? Instead of being justified by the blood, and obedience, and righteousness of Christ, 'tis establishing a scheme for being justified by our own righteousness and obedience. Indeed, how to reconcile this with those plain and strong expressions of being *justified by the blood, and made righteous by the obedience of Christ*; and with those other numerous texts in which works of every sort are excluded from all agency in our justification, I profess, for my part, I cannot see. Not to observe at present, that this is bringing in a new rule of duty and judgment in opposition to the moral law, whose eternal and unchangeable obligations we have, I hope, fully established. I might add, in the last place,
that

that this is the common and genuine sense of the Reformed Churches. *

In short, I know of no law, † that faith can be supposed to satisfy; as 'tis in us, 'tis im-

P 3

perfect

* I might easily make this appear by referring to the *Harmony of Confessions*. But instead of that, I shall transcribe a passage out of a celebrated writer, who knew as well as any man, what the sense of the Protestant Churches was, and how to state and defend it: “ Inquirendum porro restat, *quomodo fides iustifi-*
“ *cet.* Non certe eo sensu, quasi Deus, loco perfectæ obedi-
“ *entiæ, quam ex legis rigore habere debebamus ad justificati-*
“ *onem, actum fidei & novæ obedientiæ Evangelicæ ex fide*
“ *promanantis, gratiose acceptet; Hoc enim est totum Evan-*
“ *gelium irritum facere. In locum perfectæ obedientiæ, quam*
“ *lex ad justificationem postulabat, Evangelium non substituit*
“ *nostram fidem, sed Christi obedientiam, qua jus legis impletum*
“ *est. Falsum etiam est, fidem, novamque obedientiam unam*
“ *eandemque rem esse. Fateor, fidem virtutem esse lege Dei*
“ *præceptam, & credentem, eo ipso quod credit, obedire Deo.*
“ *Fateor item, nullam fidem pro vera & viva habendam esse,*
“ *quæ non est bonis operibus foeta. Sed tamen aliud longe fi-*
“ *des est, aliud obedientia ex fide promanans, præsertim in hoc,*
“ *de quo agimus, justificationis negotio, ubi semper Paulus om-*
“ *nium qualiumcunque operum obedientiam fidei contradistin-*
“ *guit. Denique neque veritas neque iustitia Dei patiuntur,*
“ *ut fidem & obedientiam nostram, quæ imperfecta sunt, pro*
“ *perfectis admittat. Vult enim Deus, ut jus legis in iustifica-*
“ *tione nostra impleatur, non ut ei quicquam derogetur.”* And
after pointing out some other mistakes of the like nature, our
author adds,——— “ Genuina reformatorum sententia hæc
“ est: Fidem iustificare quatenus est vinculum arctissimæ unionis
“ nostræ cum Christo, per quam omnia, quæ Christi sunt, no-
“ stra quoque fiant: Sive, quod eodem sensu dicitur, quatenus
“ est doni oblatus acceptatio, faciens donationem ratam & irrevoc-
“abilem, & hoc voluit apostolus, quando scripsit.” *Rom. IV.*
4. *Fidem imputari ad iustitiam.* Witsl. Oecon. Lib. III. Cap.
VIII. §. 48, 56.

† This perhaps may seem strange to some, who remember that the Apostle speaks expressly of the *law of faith*, *Rom. iii.*
27. But when I say, I know of no law that faith can be sup-
posed

perfect like every other grace, and as such can no more justify than love, or hope, or patience: But when we view it in its relation to its object, the Lord Jesus Christ; when we view it as the receiving grace, that grace by which Christ and his righteousness are received and applied, so 'tis the instrument and means of our justification: *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness*, Rom. x. 10. And thus faith justifies, as 'tis the hand that receives that righteousness by which we are justified; as the hand may be said to make rich, not that it properly does so, but as it receives the rich gift, or legacy; *even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe*. Rom. iii. 22.

And this, I apprehend, gives us the true reason, why God hath deputed faith to this office, or appointed our justification, by the righteousness

posed to satisfy, I mean it of a law in the strict and proper sense of the word, as a rule of duty, with a sanction annexed, by virtue of which, upon performing the duty required we stand entitled to the reward; and in this sense we read of the *law of works*, in the former part of that verse. But then the word *law* is likewise used in a much more lax sense; either for that dispensation under which the *Jewish Church* was, so 'tis used, Joh. i. 17. Gal. iii. 23. 24. Or, in a laxer sense still, for any doctrine or institution of religion, or revelation of the will of God, as in Psal. xix. 7. Isa. ii. 3. and in this sense the word is used, in the passage referred to, and opposed to the *law of works*: The *law of faith* is the doctrine of faith. Such *Antithesis's* are not unusual in the Apostle's writings, when the same word is opposed to itself, being varied from the sense in which it was used before. We have a plain instance of this in this very word, Rom. vii. 25. Where the word *law* must necessarily be taken in a very different sense, when applied to the *law of God*, and the *law of sin*,

teousness of Christ, to be in a way of believing: 'Tis because faith is of all graces the most receptive. The very nature and excellency of it lies in this, that it goes directly out of self, empties the soul of all self-dependance, and receives all it wants for pardon and life as the free gift of God through Christ: and in so doing, it sets the crown upon the head of free grace alone, and entitles that to the whole glory of our salvation. And herein it falls in with the great design which God has been carrying on from the beginning. God's great design, in the whole scheme of our redemption and salvation by Christ, is the exaltation of his own glory, the glory of his perfections, especially of his grace; he can have no higher, nor greater end than this: And as this is undoubtedly the end of God, this end faith falls in with; It readily and entirely gives into it, and gladly concurs in every thing that may promote it; O says faith, if God may but be glorified, his grace honoured and exalted in my salvation, in this I do rejoyce, and will rejoyce. "And this " is that (to borrow a passage from an eminent writer, * and I do it the rather, because it throws such a particular light upon our text and the adjacent context; this is that) " which " God will bring all unto, or they shall perish; namely, that *shame be ours*, and the " *whole glory* of our salvation be his alone. So " he expresseth his design, Isa. xlv. 22, 23, 24,

P 4

25. ver.

* Dr Owen, on the cxxxth Psal. p. 254.

“ 25. ver. 22, he proposeth himself as the on-
 “ ly relief for sinners ; *Look unto me* (saith he)
 “ *and be saved, all ye ends of the earth* ; But
 “ what if men take some other course, and
 “ *look well to themselves*, and so decline the
 “ way of meer mercy and grace ? Why, saith
 “ he, ver. 23. *I have sworn by my self, the*
 “ *word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness*
 “ *and shall not return, that unto me every*
 “ *knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear,*
 “ Look you unto that ; but I have *sworn* that
 “ you shall do so, or answer your disobedience
 “ at the day of judgment : What do the Saints
 “ hereupon ? ver. 24, 25. *Surely shall one say,*
 “ *in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.*
 “ *In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be ju-*
 “ *stified, and shall glory.* They bring their
 “ hearts to accept of all *righteousness* from him,
 “ and to give *all glory* unto him.”

6. This language of the Church farther
 speaks a thorow and entire renunciation of eve-
 ry other righteousness for the purposes for which
 we receive, and depend upon this. I have al-
 ready had occasion to hint this as I have gone a-
 long ; but 'tis of such great importance, and
 so much of the Spirit of the Gospel lies in it,
 that it can't be too often impressed. *In the*
Lord have I righteousness ; the soul centers all
 it's hope and dependance upon this righteouf-
 ness in exclusion of every other : as the Psalmist
 expressly confines his regards to this, Psal. lxxi,

16. *I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only:* He will mention no other righteousness in his pleadings with God for mercy, and expectations from him.

And with what disdain does the Apostle Paul turn his back upon the best and highest pretensions of self, *counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ; and but dung, that he may win Christ, and be found in him, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*, Phil. iii. 8, 9. ? There is a manifest and beautiful gradation in the Apostle's discourse. He had before described all the privileges he enjoyed as a member of the Jewish Church, ver 5; with which he joins, in the next verse, all the duties he had performed as a man of the most exact morality, being, as he expresses it, *touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless* *; and to these he now adds all his farther improvements in holiness; and

* Mr Pierce by that *righteousness of the law*, concerning which the Apostle here says *he was blameless*, will by no means understand any thing but the conformity he had lived in to the ritual or ceremonial part of the *Mosaick Law*. But, 1. As the Apostle is here describing the way and manner of his former life, I can't but think, he must mean the same that he does, when describing it elsewhere: As particularly when he says, Acts xxiii. 1. that he *had lived in all good conscience before God*; and 2 Tim. i. 3. that he *had served God from his forefathers with a pure conscience*. The passages are exactly parallel with that under consideration, and refer to the same thing; Which therefore ought to be interpreted by one another: but surely they mean a great deal

and with what a becoming contempt, a warm and generous disdain, does he renounce and disclaim them

deal more, than that the Apostle had been a strict observer of the ceremonial law, and must include the careful practice of the duties of morality. 2. He had before included the conformity he had lived in to the ceremonial law, in the character he had given of himself as a *Pharisee*, ver. 5. They being famous for their strict observance of all the rights and usages of that law : So that to suppose the Apostle means no more than a ceremonial righteousness, when he says in the next verse, that he was *touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless* ; if it does not make him guilty of a downright tautology, at least makes his whole discourse the most flat and dead, which is plainly the most spirited and animated : Not to add, that this way of explaining the words quite loses that gradation which is so observable in them, and which throws such a beauty over the whole paragraph. 3. He is here renouncing all that righteousness on which he depended whilst a Pharisee : but 'tis certain the Pharisees, however fond they were of the ceremonial law, were far from depending upon the observance of that alone for justification, unless it were the viler and baser sort of them but added thereto their own duties of morality, as is plain from the parable, Luke xviii. 11, 12. The Apostle therefore must renounce some other righteousness, besides that which lay in the observance of ceremonial institutions ; unless we will say, that he renounces no other righteousness, but what the worst of that superstitious sect depended on. 4. Supposing, but not granting, that the Apostle speaks here only of that righteousness, which lay in a conformity to the ceremonial law, he must intend a great deal more in the 9th verse, where the righteousness, that he disclaims for justification, is a righteousness in opposition to that which is by faith ; and faith in justification is all along opposed not only to the works of the ceremonial law, but to all works whatever, See Rom. iii. 28. iv. 4, 5, 6. Gal. ii. 16. I might add, that the *righteousness of the law* is in the original without the article prefixed to νόμος ; and so according to Mr *Locke's* rule (see above p. 43.) ought to be translated *righteousness of law*, not referring to the ceremonial and ritual law of *Moses*, but to law in general, or the eternal rule of right and wrong : And if we understand it in this sense, it will include a quite other righteousness, than what lay in the observance of any positive law whatever.

them all for justification? They were *loss, and dross, and dung*, no other, no better, expressions of the highest contempt; wholly worthless and unavailable, what he could not trust in, would therefore absolutely and entirely renounce and disclaim, for this purpose. As elsewhere he speaks of it as a known thing, a granted point, Gal. ii. 16. *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ; that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.* What some have pretended that the Apostle by *his own righteousness*, and the *works of the law*, intends only the ceremonial law, and the observances of that, I have before obviated.* 'Tis self-righteousness in every shape and form that he thus renounces and disclaims: as the Church readily acknowledges, *but we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*, Is. lxiv. 6. and *we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.* Dan ix. 18. The Church would not plead her own righteousness with God for any mercy,

ever. Nor is there any difficulty in what this writer suggests, "that the Apostle could not say, that he counted that degree of moral righteousness to which he had attained to be loss, or a prejudice to him." For he speaks of it as such, only in a comparative view, or as a dependance thereon diverted him from Christ, and hazarded his salvation by him.

* See above p. 32.

mercy, shall she then trust in it for justification?

And therefore, as our text represents this as the sense and language of the church collectively consider'd, we shall find, thro' the whole scripture, that 'tis likewise the sense and language of every individual believer. *Jacob* who readily owns, that he is *less than the least of all God's mercies*, Gen. xxxii. 10. will as readily own himself to have no righteousness to plead with God for pardon. *Job*, with what shame and confusion of face, does he confess his sins and his guilt? *I have sinned, and what shall I do unto thee? am vile, and what shall I answer thee? He abhors himself;* and when he thinks of standing before God in judgment, *How shall man be just with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.* Job ix. 2, 3. The Psalmist exactly in the same humble language, *and enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.* Psal. cxliii. 2. He dreads nothing more than God's dealing with him upon the foot of any righteousness of his own: as elsewhere he cries out with great anxiety and concern, *If thou Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?* Psal. cxxx. 3. The best know themselves to be but *unprofitable servants*; and when *they know nothing by themselves, yet are they not hereby justified.* The Prodigal when the power of grace had reached and changed his heart, how does he
return

return to his father's house, confessing his guilt, and readily owning he had no pretensions to the least favour? His language speaks the deepest sense of his own sins and unworthiness; *Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son*, Luke xv. 18, 19. In the very same spirit the convinced Publican humbles himself at the foot-stool of mercy; he smites upon his breast with deep compunction of heart, hardly dares lift up an eye to heaven, nor has he any plea, but what he draws from the free and unbounded mercy of God, Luke xviii. 13. This therefore is deeply inlaid in the hearts of all the saints; they have the clearest discovery of the absolute insufficiency of their own best righteousness for their justification with God; and, therefore, they so entirely and readily renounce and disclaim it for this purpose, and seek a justifying righteousness in Christ alone. *

I can't

* These are the natural and undisguised sentiments of those eminent Saints, which we find in scripture dealing with God about the pardon of their sins, and their acceptance with him. And they shine with so much evidence, that they have sometimes forced an acknowledgment from some of the most eminent men of the Church of Rome. I can't forbear inserting here a remarkable instance of this in Cardinal *Hofius*, who presided at the Council of *Trent*, under *Pius* the IVth. These are some of the expressions of his last will, when he came to see things in a very different light from what he did, when presiding in that council under the direction of the Pope.——— *I approach the throne of thy grace, O Father of mercies and of all consolation, to the end that I may obtain mercy, and find grace in thy sight!—I am not worthy, that thou shouldst behold me with the eyes of thy majesty; but as*
it

I can't conclude this head, in which I have represented the agreeing sentiments of the Saints, through the whole scripture, in renouncing every thing in their own righteousness, and betaking themselves by humble faith to the righteousness of Christ alone for justification, better than in the words of the first and earliest writer of Christianity, *Clement*, the fellow-labourer of the Apostle *Paul*, and whose name, he tells us, *was in the book of life*, Phil. iv. iii. This venerable father of the Church, in his epistle to the *Corinthians*, having mentioned the faith and blessing of *Abraham*, from whom so many great and good men came, who were blessed with him, thus goes on, *
 “ They were all therefore greatly glorified,
 “ not

it is most worthy, that for the sake of his death and passion, thou shouldst not only look upon me, but crown me also ; 'Tis therefore that I come unto thee, most dear Father, and that without any merits, but those inestimable ones of thy Son Jesus Christ, my Lord, and my Redeemer. I bring thee the merit of that death, wherein alone I place all my hope and my confidence ; that is my righteousness, my satisfaction, my redemption, and my propitiation. The death of my Lord is my merit. See here what the conscience says, when it beholds its sins and its good works ; and it will never speak otherwise, especially at the hour of death, where it scatters away its illusions. So true is it, says that excellent writer from whom I have transcribed this passage, that conscience cannot always be seduced by the errors of the understanding : 'Tis true also, that when men are approaching the throne of God's justice, it is difficult to preserve that spirit of pride, which is in the *Roman* school. See a discourse concerning the merit of good works, among the tracts in the *Papist* controversy, supposed to be written by Dr *Alix*. p. 30, 31.

* Πάντες ὧν ἐδοξάσθησαν ἢ ἐμεγαλύνθησθαι, ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν, ἢ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν, τῆς δικαιοπραγίας ἢ καλουργίας, ἀλλὰ

“ not for their own sake, or for their own
 “ works, or for the righteousness that they
 “ themselves wrought, but through his will.
 “ And we also being called by the same will
 “ in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves,
 “ neither by our own wisdom, or knowledge,
 “ or piety, or the works which we have done
 “ in the holiness of our hearts : but by that
 “ faith by which God Almighty has justified all
 “ men from the beginning ; to whom be glo-
 “ ry for ever and ever. *Amen.*”

7. The highest valuation of this righte-
 ousness, with the most determined adherence
 to it, is another thing that seems to be inti-
 mated in this language of the Church con-
 cerning it, *Surely, shall one say, in the Lord*
have I righteousness: The soul gives it the pre-
 ference to every other righteousness, cleaves
 to it with supreme affection, nor can any thing
 be weighed in the ballance against it. *All*
things else are but *loss* and *dung*, when com-
 pared with it ; what can't be brought into
 the account, nor be depended on for our justi-
 fication without extremest hazard ; and there-
 fore in this view are nothing worth ; as 'tis
 for

ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς θελήματι αὐτοῦ. Καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν διὰ θε-
 λήματι αὐτοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ κληθέντες, ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν
 δικαιώμεθα, ἢ δὲ διὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας σοφίας, ἢ συνέσεως, ἢ
 εὐσεβείας, ἢ ἔργων ἃν κατεργασάμεθα ἐν ὁσιότητι καρ-
 δίας· ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς πίστεως, δι' ἧς πάντας τὰς ἀπ' αἰῶνος
 ὁ παντοκράτωρ Θεὸς ἐδικαίωσεν ὡς ἔσω δόξα εἰς τὰς αἰῶνας
 τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν. *Clementis Epist. 1. ad Corinth. apud Cot-*
teler. Patr. Apostol. Vol. I. p. 166. § 32.

for this purpose (as hath been already hinted) that the Apostle expresses so contemptible an opinion of his own best righteousness. Shall not then the righteousness of Christ fill the highest place in the esteem of the soul, and *in all things have the pre-eminence*? 'Tis complete and perfect for all the purposes for which we want it. And as nothing can be added to it, so the humble Saint will never forego his hold of it, and dependance on it. *'Tis revealed from faith to faith*; is by faith only, and faith sees that in it, which determines it to abide by it. That pardon that we speak to ourselves, which is not built upon this righteousness, is but a delusive dream; that peace which is not established upon this as the bottom of it, is but blind presumption and confidence; those hopes of heaven which are not supported here, are but as *the spider's web, and the giving up of the ghost*. This therefore is that most perfect and glorious righteousness, which the convinced sinner desires to accept, and the enlightened Saint to rejoice in, and abide by. 'Tis of God's ordaining and appointing; Christ fulfilled it, and the Father accepted it; and where, according to the constitution of the new covenant, 'tis imputed to the soul in believing, upon what an immoveable foundation are all its hopes established?

And this is what seems to be intimated in the emphatical form of expression which the Church

Church uses ; *surely, shall one say* ; the soul is clear in this matter and at a point, there's no room for wavering, nor farther dispute : 'Tis determin'd in its adherence to this righteousness, and at all events will abide by it : This it will plead against all the indictments of the law, the accusations of Satan, and challenges of conscience : On this it will support itself in its closest dealings with God, and in the fullest views of eternity ; now at a throne of grace, hereafter at a bar of judgment. And if it may but *be found in this righteousness* ; have it, obtain an interest in it, and be able to speak the language, *in the Lord have I it*, here is its point of rest.

And what an accent does it give to the christian's joy, when he can see his own personal interest herein ? as the words of the Church seem to include something of this ; *in the Lord have I righteousness* ; 'tis the language of faith embracing this righteousness, and filled with some joyful hope of an interest in it. So the Apostle tells us, 2 Tim. i. 12. that *he knew whom he had believed* ; knew who that Jesus was, that was the object of his faith, and that he had believed in him. As elsewhere he speaks of the love and death of Christ in an appropriating strain, Gal. ii. 20. *who loved me, and gave himself for me*. This is an eminent attainment in religion ; and when faith can reach this height, what divine comfort and soul-satisfying joy does it bring along with it ?

Q

it ? Not that the highest Saint can always see his interest in Christ and his righteousness with the same degree of evidence, and entertain it with the same measure of joy. But still there is something in faith, when in proper and lively exercise, that is tending this way. It appropriates Christ and his benefits ; glories in him and his righteousness, *God forbid that it should glory in any thing else* ; centers all its hopes upon him, desires above all things to be found in him ; and may it but see its interest in him, what room does this make for the most enlarged joy ? *We joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement*, Rom. v. 11. In fine, the more we are formed into the temper and spirit of the Gospel, the greater esteem we shall have of this righteousness, and with the higher emotions of joy shall we survey it, especially when we can see our own claim and interest in it. As the Church subjoins, in the next verse to the text, describing the great duty which believers owe to Christ in view of their relation to, and interest in him, *in the Lord shall all the Seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory*.

I can't well dismiss this Head without observing, that tho' I have consider'd the language of the Church in our text, as including in it some well-grounded assurance of her own interest in the righteousness of Christ for pardon and acceptance with God, yet I can by no means

means look upon such assurance as necessarily included in that faith which is justifying and saving. 'Tis one thing to believe in Christ for pardon and salvation, and another and very different thing to know that I have believed in him. The Prophet plainly speaks of it as no uncommon case, for one that truly *fears God*, to be brought into that state, in which he can, at least for the present, form no comfortable persuasion concerning his own interest in the grace and blessings of the covenant, Isa. l. 10. The most eminent in faith have sometimes lost their assurance thro' the violence of temptation, and in an hour of growing darkness and prevailing unbelief; and I doubt not, but that there are many, who *have believed to the saving of the soul*, who never attained it; have lived long strangers to assurance, and perhaps never reach'd it all their days. The Apostle *Peter* directs believers, *to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure*, 2 Pet. i. 10. Plainly intimating, that assurance would cost the believer much care and pains: He must frequently examine his state, look into the frame and temper of his soul, search out his evidences, bring them to the test of the word, and by humble prayer and frequent reviews of the *reasons of his hope*, at once confirm his faith, and clear up his interest in God. Nor can assurance ordinarily be expected in any other way. Hence, we meet with a very evident distinction between faith and assurance,

and the Apostle makes the one not to be the same with, but an effect and consequence of the other, through a further work of the Spirit distinct from that by which faith itself is produced, Eph. i. 13. *in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.* The *sealing* here spoken of, is that work of the Spirit whereby he attests to the truth of his own grace in the heart, and *bears witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God.* But who sees not that this is evidently distinguish'd from the work of faith itself? nor can ordinarily be expected, but by a fresh and farther operation of the Spirit added to that by which faith is at first wrought in the soul. To the same purpose he prays for believers, that *the God of hope would fill them with all joy and peace in believing, that they may abound in hope thro' the power of the Holy Ghost,* Rom. xv. 13. where joy, and peace, and large measures of hope, such as accompany assurance, though they are always in proportion to faith, are plainly distinguished from it; are, indeed, rather fruits and effects of faith, as under exercise and improvement, than of the essence of it as justifying *. Add to what has been already observ'd, how many there are, who after they have gained some comfortable persuasion of their interest in Christ, and the saving blessings of the covenant, have not only lost it, but sunk

* See *Owen* of Justif. p. 139.

into great darkness and sad distress of mind, questioning their state, arraigning all their former experiences, throwing up all their former hopes, and even in the mournful style of *Heman*, writing themselves *free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom God remembreth no more*. Such dark hours and dispensations God has, for wise reasons, suffered many to know, who have sometimes lived in believing views of his love, and been filled with joyful hopes of an interest in him. And yet concerning such persons, however assurance may be intercepted, and their evidences be all clouded and lost, we must not presently say, that they have lost their faith; are without all faith, because they are for the present without the comforts and evidences of it. For these reasons then, and many others that might be suggested, I cannot but think, that they raise the notion of saving faith much too high, who fix it in assurance, personal and subjective assurance concerning our own interest in Christ, and the special love of God in and through him. Such assurance, indeed, 'tis the duty of believers to press after, and could they attain more of it, how comfortably would they walk with God, how sweet and delightful would all the duties of the christian life be, and with what growing hope would they be pressing forwards to that world, where they shall for ever get above all doubts and fears? But still to make such assurance a necessary and essential ingredient in

faith, seems very contrary both to the accounts we have of faith in the scripture, and to the known experiences of the saints : 'Tis indeed, as has been often and justly observed, to place the essence of faith in the highest actings and attainments of it. But to return from this digression, which was only designed to obviate a mistake that some have fallen into in stating the nature of faith, which has an uncomfortable tendency *to make the heart of many sad, whom God hath not made sad.*

8. In this disposition and tendency of soul towards the righteousness of Christ, there is a ready and entire submission to it. When the soul is brought to cleave to, and acquiesce in, this righteousness, *every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of Christ*, is brought into an obediencial subjection to him ; and what now will its language be but this ?
 “ Lord, here I bow and submit, and yield myself the captive of thy grace. I bid thy grace welcome upon its own terms, and desire entirely to acquiesce in that method of pardon, justification, and life which thou hast appointed. I have been long indeed quarrelling with it, and whilst I have been *seeking righteousness by the works of the law, and labouring to establish my own, have not submitted unto the righteousness of God* ; loth to forego all dependance upon every thing in myself, and as a lost, guilty, perishing sinner
 “ cast

“ cast myself entirely upon the grace of God
 “ through the righteousness of another, how
 “ have I rejected all the provision which the
 “ gospel makes of such a righteousness, and
 “ in opposition to it maintained a stiff ad-
 “ herence to some righteousness of my own ?
 “ But I hope I have been made to see the
 “ folly and danger of all such attempts ;
 “ and O ! may a proud, unbelieving heart ne-
 “ ver more oppose itself to the righteousness
 “ of a mediator, and the free grace of God as
 “ exercised in and through him.” This is the
 true Spirit of the Gospel, and where-ever God
 by the power of his grace advances his work in
 truth, he always forms the soul into it. The
 want hereof threw down to the ground the
 whole *Jewish Church* in their day : *for they,*
being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going
about to establish their own, have not submitted
themselves unto the righteousness of God, Rom. x. 3.
 The Apostle speaks of their acceptance of the
 righteousness of Christ, as the only ground of a
 sinner’s justification, as a point of submission,
 which they were never brought to.

And indeed, every thing in the native pride
 and corruption of our hearts, till purged and
 bowed by divine grace, lies cross to it. The
 ignorant self-conceited Pharisee *thanks God,*
that he is not as other men. He is so good and
 religious, so punctual in one duty, and zealous
 in another, and exact in all, that he makes no
 doubt of being able to deal with God upon the

foot of his own righteousness. And when a person has with a great deal of pains been labouring to patch up a righteousness of his own, retrenching some sins that perhaps he has long lived in, and taking up those duties, that look fair in the eye of the world, and which perhaps he has long allowed himself in the neglect of, O how hard is it to be brought to deny and renounce all this as to all dependance on it, and to seek an interest in a righteousness wholly without us, and which we had no manner of hand in the working of it out ! But thus it must be, and always is, where persons are brought in a gospel way to embrace the righteousness of Christ, and adventure all their hopes upon it : Such will enter into the language of the Church in our text ; *in the Lord have I righteousness*, in Christ and him alone ; neither law nor gospel, neither earth nor heaven, neither men nor angels know any other. This is that *righteousness of the kingdom*, and great blessing of the covenant, which we ought to seek with the greatest ardor ; and when we have gained a discovery of it, how should we bow before it with the lowest submission, and entertain it with the highest sense of our obligations to that grace, which has provided it, and bestows every saving blessing in and thro' it ? Hence,

In the 9th and last place, when the church is represented, saying, *in the Lord have I righteousness*,

teousness, it must include an holy gratitude and thankfulness to God for it. The humble saint can't look upon this righteousness without considering it as a just ground of thanksgiving and praise. He sees the need and want of it, the glory and perfection of this righteousness, the blessed purposes that are answered by it, and how graciously 'tis proposed in the gospel for his acceptance and interest in it: How should he then learn in the language of the affectionate Psalmist, to call upon his soul to bless God for it? *Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; forget not* this greatest and best of benefits and blessings. The providing and accepting this righteousness; the giving faith in it; the imputing it to the soul, and justifying it in and through it, are some of the highest instances of that grace, which spreads a glory all over the gospel. Shall we not then entertain it with the highest thankfulness, and bless God for every discovery of it; make it the delightful subject of our choice, and cleave to it with supreme affection; magnify that grace which shines out with so much lustre in it, and study to express our gratitude in every way which so great a favour calls for? whilst our warmest acknowledgments will still be disproportionate to the greatness of the mercy. This is that temper of mind, which every view he takes of this righteousness should excite in the bosom
of

of the thankful christian now ; as the delightful work of eternity will be to overflow with gratitude, joy and praise, whilst joining in the songs of those, who are doing homage to the Redeemer, as to whom they are indebted for the whole of their salvation.

I have been the longer in representing that tendency and disposition of soul, which the church here discovers, and believers always bear towards this righteousness, that in the light of these sentiments we may be assisted to form some judgment, what is the prevailing turn and bent of our own minds towards it.

REC O L L E C T I O N.

Come then, my soul, and when so divine and glorious a righteousness is provided and exhibited in the gospel, and which the saints in all ages have discover'd such an high esteem of, how dost thou stand affected towards it ? Hast thou had any heart-impressive discovery of thy want of it ? any heart-affecting discovery of its superior excellency and glory ? Hast thou seen and felt thy misery by reason of sin ? and whilst pained with a view of thy guiltiness in the sight of a holy and righteous God, where art thou looking, and to whom and what, for pardon and acceptance with him ? Here's the great enquiry, How sin may be pardoned, thy sins pardoned ; and such a sinner as thou art, justified in the sight of God. Hast thou dwelt
upon

upon this enquiry? have thy thoughts been seriously and solemnly exercised about it? and what has been the result? Has it brought thee to attend with pleasure to the discovery which the gospel makes of a righteousness in another, when thou hast none of thine own? Hast thou seen the redeemer's righteousness to be every ways suited to thy case, and equal to all thy guilt; a perfect and an all-sufficient righteousness, a perfect and an all-sufficient relief? Has the discovery of this been welcome to thee? been as life from the dead? Art thou blessing God from the bottom of thy heart for providing such a righteousness? and dost thou *count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of it?* and in what manner hast thou been dealing with God about it, and an interest in it?

Can'st thou, O my soul! remember the time, the day, when thou wast prostrate at a throne of grace, and begging of God, that he would give thee to believe in Christ and his righteousness? impute it to thee, and pardon and justify thee in and thro' it? Dost thou thankfully receive it, and gladly make out to it, as the guilty man-slayer to the city of refuge, as the perishing sinner to his only hope? Dost thou fear to stop in any thing short of this righteousness, and lest any thing should turn thee aside from it? Go on, my soul, and see whether thou can'st quit and renounce every thing else; do it readily, chearfully, and entirely,
that

that thou may'st be found in Christ alone : *None but Christ, None but Christ* ; Dost thou lay the stress of all thy hopes on him, *as there is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved* ; and when thou wantest pardon and peace, comfort and establishment, art thou looking and applying to him for them ? to him and none else ? and what dost thou know of real and supreme love to him, as the fruit and effect of that faith, whereby thou dost receive him ? O my soul ! how oughtest thou to take care of every thing, that would weaken thy esteem and reverence for him, to whose righteousness, death and love thou owest thine all ? Art thou mourning that thou lovest him no more ? but still art thou determin'd to abide by him ? Is the pride of thy spirit bowed to a thankful acceptance of his righteousness and grace ? and if thou canst not reach that height as to see thine own interest in him, art thou following hard after him ? and amidst all the fears and infirmities of thy present state, art thou sometimes pressing forwards with a holy impatience to that day, when thou shalt join in the praises of those, who are ascribing *blessing, and honour, and glory, and power unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever ?*

S E R M O N VI.

ISAIAH xlv. 24.

*Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have
I righteousness.*

HAVING in the prosecution of our subject explained the nature of that righteousness which we have in the Lord Jesus Christ for our justification ; stated the way in which we come to have an interest in it ; and traced out at large that disposition and tendency of soul, which believers bear and discover towards it : Let us now proceed in the

Fourth and last place, to represent the perfection and value of this righteousness ; how glorious it is in itself, and how full and extensive to answer all the purposes for which we want it. And

I. 'Tis the righteousness of a glorious person ; for 'tis the righteousness of one, who is God as well as man. In that obedience which Christ performed, and in those sufferings which he sustained in the room and stead of his people, he is to be considered not only, not merely as man, but as he was and is, God-man ; as truly

truly God, as really man ; and God-man in the one person of the Mediator : And so near was the union of the Two natures in the person of our *Immanuel*, that from it results a communication of properties and characters, so that what was proper to one nature, and is only true of that, is predicated of the other, or rather of the person constituted of both.

We have a passage from Christ's own mouth in his conference with *Nicodemus*, that will help to explain this ; and as our Lord was then gradually opening out to him the method of salvation, he seems to aim at giving him some notices of the constitution of his own person, by whom this salvation was to be effected : To this purpose he tells him, Joh. iii. 13. *And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven.* Christ in his human nature was not then in heaven, but engaged in a personal conference with *Nicodemus* on earth ; but he was then in heaven as to his divine nature ; and so what belonged to one nature only is predicated of the person. We have other passages in which our Lord speaks of himself in the same manner ; as when he tells his disciples upon one occasion, *me ye have not always with you*, Mark xiv. 7. and on another, *Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world*, Mat. xxviii. 20. In his human nature he was not to be always with his disciples, but was soon to leave them, and *the heavens must receive*

receive him, until the times of restitution of all things ; whilst in his divine nature he would be present with his Churches to the end of the world.

'Tis thus in the case before us ; Christ had an inferior and created nature, as to which he was one of us ; and with respect to this nature he obey'd, and suffer'd, and wrought out righteousness. But then he likewise had another and superior nature, with respect to which *he thought it no robbery to be equal with God, and was over all, God blessed for ever.* And as to this nature he was eternally exalted above all possibility of obeying, or suffering. Now as Christ was thus a complex person constituted of Two natures so vastly different, we find those things predicated of him with respect to his sufferings and death, which were, and could be only true of him as to one of those natures. So we read, that *God purchased the Church with his own blood*——that *the Lord of glory was crucified*——and *that God laid down his life for us.* Not that Christ as God shed his blood, or was crucified and laid down his life, that were blasphemy to suppose ; but he that was God as well as man, did this. By vertue of the near and inseparable union of the Two natures in the person of our *Immanuel*, what belonged to One nature only, belonged only to the *finite, passible, mortal* nature, is predicated of the other ; the sufferings of the one nature are spoken of as the sufferings of the
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the other, or rather, as I said, of the person constituted of both *. The divine nature not

* We have no union in our world, that can be supposed to come up to this mysterious and adorable union of the divine and human nature in the one person of the Mediator. What seems to bear the nearest resemblance to it, is the union of soul and body, a material and an immaterial principle, in man. And this, I apprehend, may in some measure assist our conceptions as to what I was taking notice of above, the having such very different things predicated of the person of Christ. For by virtue of the union of soul and body in man, the properties of soul and body, which are so very different, are affirmed of the person, tho' agreeing only to one of the principles of which he is constituted. Thus, for instance, we say of *Peter*, that he is fair, well-proportion'd, &c. tho' only so with respect to his body; and that he is learned, wise, thoughtful, &c. tho' only so with respect to his soul: That is, we affirm that of the person, which only agrees to one of the constituent principles of his nature considered by itself. In other instances we affirm that of the person, which agrees to neither of the constituent principles of his nature considered alone, and is only true of the man as constituted of both; as when we say of *Peter*, that he served his country with honour, purchased such an estate, &c. here we attribute that to *Peter*, which belongs neither to soul or body considered alone, but only to the man as compounded of both. And thus it is with respect to Christ, by virtue of the wonderful union of two such distinct natures in his person. When we say of him, that he suffered and died, we mean it of his human nature only; when we say of him, that he *thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, that he is omniscient, omnipresent, &c. we mean it only with respect to his divine nature; and when we say of him, that he is the mediator, the redeemer and saviour of sinners, we mean it of his person constituted of both natures. And as this union of the two natures, the human and divine, in the one person of the Mediator does thus evidently lay a foundation for the several things, which are affirmed of him, and were done by him in the œconomy of our salvation, this should satisfy us with respect to the constitution of his person without indulging to nice and curious enquiries about the nature and *modus* of this union; things which God has not seen fit to reveal, and which we have the highest reason to believe are infinitely above our grasp. Vid. *Brown's Sermons*, p. 113, &c. *Examinat. of Bp Burnet's Exposit. of the 2d Article*, p. 36.

only

only supported him in all his sufferings, but influenced into them. All along the union between the Two natures subsisted, so that, not the divine nature by itself, nor the human by itself, but the person constituted of both was the principle of all he did, and suffered as Mediator.

And as actions and sufferings must be estimated by the dignity of the person whose they are, what must be the excellency and efficacy of the obedience and sufferings of the Son of God? This made Christ's death a perfect atonement, and his blood an all-sufficient ransom; derived such a value upon all he did and suffered, as made it equal to all our guilt, and meritorious of every blessing. Hence we read, that there is an infinitely superior efficacy in the *blood of Christ* to that of all the sacrifices under the law; because *through the eternal Spirit, he offered himself without spot to God*, Heb. ix. 14. And that, *by himself he purged our sins, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person*, Heb. i. 3. So we are said to *have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, who is the image of the invisible God*, Col. i. 14, 15. and 'tis mentioned as his divine and most glorious name, that he is *Jehovah our righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 6. and this seems to be strongly intimated in the text, *in the Lord* [in Jehovah] *have I righteousness*. And again; *In the Lord* [in Jehovah] *shall all the seed of Israel be justified*.

sic. 'Tis probable that upon this account, among others, the righteousness which we have in Christ for our justification, is described as *the righteousness of God*, Rom. i. 17. x. iii. and *the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet. i. 1. As the righteousness which God appointed, so the righteousness which God wrought out in the person of the Mediator. The righteousness of him, who is God as well as man. The fulness of the Deity influences into it, and gives it a superlative and everlasting dignity and efficacy.

And how affecting, and at the same time how establishing to faith is this? 'Tis Jesus the Son of God, and who is himself *over all God blessed for ever*, that obey'd and suffer'd, that he might furnish out this righteousness. Not that he did this in his divine nature, that was eternally above all sufferings and sorrows, but in a nature that he assumed on purpose, that he might be in a capacity for it*.

Come, my soul, and adore this mystery, though thou must never think to grasp and comprehend it! To see the eternal Son of God obeying his own law; *the Lord of glory crucified*; The fellow of the Lord of hosts smote by the sword of his justice; Him, whom angels worship,

* Ad hanc passionibus dignitatem conciliandum non requirebatur, ut *ipsa Divinitas*, vel Christus qua *Deus* pateretur: Sufficiebat eum pati qui *Deus* est. Omnes enim actiones & passiones sunt personæ, & à dignitate personæ æstimantur, ac denominationem accipiunt, ut à *principio quod*, licet pro harum conditione attribuendæ fiat *naturæ* ex qua ortum habent, ut *principio quo*. *Wiss.* in Symbol. Exercitat. XV. § 7.

worship, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain, wrapt up in the meanness of our natures, and there dying that he might satisfy justice, work out righteousness, and obtain eternal redemption for us ! Let the enemies of his cross and of his glory, rend his Deity from him, and then expect salvation by him : How is it conceivable, that he, who is but a mere creature however dignified, should take such a load of guilt upon himself, meet the wrath of an almighty God, stand up under it, and give infinite justice all that it did or could ask ? How is it possible that the strength and righteousness of a creature should be the object of my faith, or a foundation on which to rest the weight of my eternal hopes ? But what a rock do I feel under me, when I anchor upon the strength and righteousness of one, who is God as well as man ? Who had a human nature, that he might receive the wrath due to sin ; a divine nature, that he might stand up under it. Was man, that he might obey and suffer ; God, that he might add an infinite merit to his obedience and sufferings. “ What shall I say ? Was man, that he might have a life to lay down for us ; God, that the power of laying it down and taking it up again, might be in his own hands. Was man, that he might die ; God, that by death he might destroy him that had the power of death. Man, that by his death he might ratify the new-covenant ; God, that he might convey to the heirs of promise those

precious legacies of pardon and life. Man, that he might be a merciful high-priest touched with a feeling of our infirmities ; God, that we coming boldly to the throne of grace, might find mercy and grace to help in every time of need.* ” *Hereby perceive we the love of God*, and in this we have the firmest foundation for our faith, *because he laid down his life for us*, 1 Joh. iii. 16.

Thus had both natures their respective influence into our redemption and salvation, and and in the union of both was our Lord Jesus Christ fitted in the most wonderful manner for all the work, that as Mediator was undertaken by him. As a late learned writer † has well expressed it ; with whose words I shall take the liberty to shut up this head. “ And
 “ as the divine and human nature are personally united in Christ, so they both concur’d in effecting our redemption. The human nature had the suffering part, which
 “ was to be compleat in its kind, and then to receive the utmost perfection, and become
 “ fully meritorious and expiatory, by virtue of the union between the human and the divine nature. The sufferings of the *Son of man*,
 “ in themselves great beyond conception, and valuable beyond all comparison, are of infinite
 “ merit and efficacy, because he is the *Son of God*.”

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* Dr Manton on Christ's eternal existence. p. 186.

† Jenkins's reasonableness of the Christian Religion. Vol. II.

2. As 'tis the righteousness of a glorious person, so 'tis a righteousness that is fully adequate to the purity and perfection of the divine law. Righteousness, as we have had occasion to observe, in the general nature of it lies in a conformity to some law, that is consider'd as the measure and standard of it. And if we make the law of God, in its utmost extent and perfection, the measure and standard by which to judge of Christ's righteousness, we we shall find it every way equal and commensurate to it. The Apostle tells us, that he was *made of a woman, and made under the law*, Gal. iv. 4. that very law, which we had broke: and as he was *made under it*, so he perfectly obey'd and answer'd it. The precept of the law which prescribes duty, he yielded perfect obedience to that; and the sanction of the law, which threatens death in case of disobedience, with equal submission he bowed to that, for he *became obedient to death*; and so in his active and passive obedience provided for the honour of the law in all its requirements, and in its fullest extent. And tho' we were to suppose, that Christ's passive obedience separate from his active, might deliver from the penal effects of sin, or absolve from its guilt; yet without a complete obedience performed to its commands, either by our selves, or by another for us, we should still want that which is essentially necessary

to constitute us righteous in the sight of God, and found a title to the blessings of eternal life. And to say, where there is provision made for the satisfaction of the law, with respect to the sanction or penal part of it, that the law requires no more, insists upon no more, and hath all the righteousness that it calls for ; nothing can be more injurious to the law, as 'tis the instrument of God's moral government, and as all its commands are of immutable and everlasting obligation.

And, as obedience is the first and main thing that the law looks at, and to enforce which, is the primary end of its being given ; without such obedience performed to it, the great end of God in giving the law would be wholly lost and frustrated. Nor can I see, how it can be reconciled with the wisdom and goodness of God, to give a law at first of perfect obedience, and which, by the breach of it in one single instance, subjected the whole world to its curse ; if at the same time, the law was of such a complexion and nature, that it could be satisfied without such obedience performed to it. And therefore, when the Apostle had represented Christ as the *end of the law for righteousness*, Rom. x. 4. he presently describes the nature of that righteousness, which the law calls for as the condition of justification, as lying in *doing*, ver. 5. *for Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them.*
And

And we are said, *to be made righteous by the obedience of Christ*, that exact and perfect obedience, which he performed to the law in all its commands; as *Adam's* sin, by which we are made guilty, lay in a disobedience to this law, or in the positive and actual transgression of it, Rom. v. 19. And the Apostle speaks of *God's sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, that the righteousness of the law*, all that righteousness which the law has a right to insist on, *might be fulfilled in us*, Rom. viii. 3, 4.

And, indeed, 'tis a very different thing to have done nothing for which the law can impeach and condemn us, and to be righteous in having fulfilled in a way of active obedience that righteousness which the law requires of us. The former can only bring us into the state in which *Adam* was before the fall, or into a state in which we are no longer liable to the penalties threaten'd in the law to the transgressors of it; "for, *at best* it supposeth no more than " that a man as yet hath done nothing *actually* " *against the rule of righteousness*. Now this " may be, when yet he hath performed none " of the duties required of him to constitute " him righteous*." And when we have not done this, nor ever can do it, in our own persons, where must we apply for such righteousness, but only to the Lord Jesus Christ, who was made under the law, as the head and

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* Vide *Owen* of Justification, p. 380.

representative of his people, and in that capacity fulfilled that righteousness, which the law requires in the fullest extent of it? There seems therefore, to be a necessity of the concurrence of both the active and passive obedience of Christ in our justification; and however we may distinguish between them, yet there is no possible room in the business of our justification to exclude either of them; nor can we do it without impairing that righteousness, which God hath provided for this purpose, in an essential branch of it.

Nor is it any objection to this, that the scripture so expressly ascribes our justification to the death of Christ, Rom. v. 9. For this is not to be understood, as tho' his active obedience did not concur with his passive, as a necessary part of that righteousness, by which a guilty sinner is justified, the obedience of his life with that of his death: But the death of Christ is especially mentioned, as being the completion of his work; the last and finishing instance of that obedience which he performed to God, and beyond which the law could ask no more. In the joint obedience of his life, and of his death, Christ perfected that righteousness which his people want, and *finished the work which the Father gave him to do.*

And thus the law is far from losing any of its glory, in the way of a sinner's justification by the obedience and death of Christ; as the Prophet declares, Isa. xlii. 21. *the Lord is well pleased*

pleased for his righteousness sake, he will magnify the law, and make it honourable. Never, indeed, was the honour of the law so highly maintained, as in the perfect obedience which Christ hath paid it. But having shewn at large in a former discourse, that there is that in the righteousness of Christ, which answers the law in its utmost perfection, I insist no farther upon it: only so far as to improve this consideration, to raise our value for this righteousness, and engage us to abide by it, without attempting to add any thing to it, or set up any other righteousness in competition with it. As the Apostle, when he had, in the fore-cited passage, Rom. x. 4, 5. mentioned on the one hand, Christ as *the end of the law for righteousness*; and on the other, the strict terms of the law, as calling for perfect and sinless obedience, as ever we hope to be justified by it, presently falls into a train of reflections to this purpose, ver. 6—11. *Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (that is to bring Christ down from above.) Or who shall descend into the deep? (that is to bring up Christ again from the dead.)* As tho' there was something still wanting to be added to what Christ hath done and suffered, to make his righteousness more complete and perfect than it is: *But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt*

shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. In short, so far as we overlook the absolute purity and perfection of the law, so far we shall be in danger of growing cold to all the glories of this righteousness, and of sliding at length into a secret and habitual contempt of it. But on the other hand, were our minds filled and impressed with a suitable and lively sense hereof, this would fix the conviction of the want of this righteousness, teach us to bless God for it, settle our dependance on it, and determine us living and dying to abide by it. Add to this,

3. That being the righteousness of so glorious a person, and itself so fully adequate to the law of God, it must be extensive and effectual to answer all the great and blessed purposes, for which it was designed, and we want it.

What indeed are the purposes, for which we want a justifying righteousness, and for which this could be designed, which are not answered by it? Some have stated the matter thus : Christ's passive obedience in bearing the penalty, is what delivers us from the curse of the law ; whilst his active obedience in fulfilling the precept with so much perfection, gives

gives us a new title to heaven, and every blessing. But this perhaps may be too nice for us. Who shall dare to set bounds either to the active or passive obedience of Christ, or assign either of them its particular influence separate from the other, in the œconomy of our redemption? However, thus far we may safely go, and here we are upon sure grounds; that taking them both together they make that one complete, perfect, and everlasting righteousness, by which we are not only delivered from condemnation, but constituted righteous in the sight of God; which we may plead against all the accusations of Satan, the law, and conscience; and which establishes a firm and sure title to all the blessings of the covenant, both those of grace and those of glory. These are the purposes for which we want a justifying righteousness; and how completely and fully are they answered in the righteousness of Christ?

(1.) By this righteousness we are absolved from guilt, and freed from condemnation. If we view ourselves as sinners, or as chargeable with the breach of God's holy and righteous law, we are guilty and condemned in his sight. Sin hath subjected us to the wrath and displeasure of God, and the law condemns all without distinction; its language is the most dreadful, Gal. iii. 10. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the*

the book of the law to do them: And where is the guilty sinner that can either answer its challenges, or stand before its terrors? But how full and blessed is the provision, which God hath made in Christ for our deliverance from this state? He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us; and God hath set him forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins. The atonement in his blood is equal to all our guilt, and what procures full remission. He hath finished transgression, and made an end of sins; expiated the guilt of sin, and made a full end of all its power for condemnation, Dan. ix. 24. We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, Eph. i. 7. And God forgives for Christ's sake, Eph. iv. 32. And when he forgives thro' the blood of Christ, and for his sake, he forgives all trespasses; is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness: And there is no condemnation to them that are in him. Henceforth he sees no sin in his people, so as to charge it upon them to their condemnation; does not impute sin, and will remember it no more. There is nothing in the guilt of sin, but what the blood of Christ is effectual to expiate: It cleanseth from all sin, and we may safely trust in it for free and full forgiveness. As the Apostle in this gives us the substance and glory of the gospel, Acts xiii. 38, 39. Be it known unto

unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins : and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

(2.) By this righteousness we are justified, and constituted righteous in the sight of God. So the Apostle represents the nature and value of the blessing of justification, in opposition to the guilt and misery of that state into which we were brought by the sin of *Adam*, Rom. v. 19. *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners : So by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.* “ We are
 “ as truly righteous with the obedience of
 “ Christ imputed to us, as *Adam* was or
 “ could have been, by a compleat righteousness of his own performance : *” And this is more than being barely pardoned. This righteousness avails not only for the annulling the sentence of the law, which lay against us, but in the imputation of it the soul is made righteous in the sight of God, and according to the constitution of the Gospel-covenant will for ever remain so. Such is the plain import of the language of the text, *that in the Lord we have righteousness* : and this the Apostle represents in very significant terms, as the great end, why sin was charged upon Christ, as the surety of his people, 2 Cor. v. 21. *For he hath made*

* Dr Owen of communion, p. 207.

made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, i. e. might have in him that righteousness, which not only screens from wrath and condemnation; but which brings into a state of personal and everlasting acceptance with God, and in which we may be constituted righteous before him. There is not only a non-imputation of sin, but an imputation of righteousness. So we read of the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe, Rom. iii. 22. And, David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. Rom. iv. 6. And how great and exalted is this privilege? To have a righteousness in which God declares and accepts as righteous; to be accepted in the beloved, and have that righteousness imputed to us in believing, in which we are secure of finding full and gracious acceptance with God, and thro' which he will for ever smile, and bless.

(3.) The Christian may plead this righteousness against the accusations and challenges of all his enemies. As the Christian has many and powerful enemies, 'tis no wonder to see them often making objections to his state, and forming grievous and bitter accusations against him; especially as he is too ready himself to furnish them with matter of reproach and charge. The law against which he has sinned, and is
daily

daily sinning, how many and awful charges can it bring in against him? Satan is stiled *the accuser of the brethren, which accuseth them before God day and night*. Rev. xii. 10. And how often is conscience drawing up the indictment, and levelling it against the soul, perhaps loaded with a thousand aggravations? But be it the one or the other of these enemies, or all of them, that are arraigning and condemning, there is that in the death and righteousness of Christ, which is effectual to answer and obviate all their charges; as the Apostle upon this ground bids them all a holy defiance; Rom. viii. 33, 34. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died. Yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.* He looks to Christ dying to satisfy divine justice for sin, rising from the dead as having made such satisfaction, gone to heaven in the virtue of his atoning sacrifice, and there pleading the merit of his righteousness and blood, and here he finds full and blessed relief. What can now affect the believers state, and bring him again into condemnation? The law must first strike his surety, before it can implead the believer; nor can it invalidate his pardon, but it must first set aside that righteousness which he pleads in arrest of judgment. And what accusations can Satan bring in against him, which are not for ever answered in
Christ's

Christ's blood? And what satisfies the law, and silences Satan, shall it not satisfy and silence conscience? Conscience is nothing else but the echo of the voice of the law in the sinner's bosom: and can we retreat to that which answers the law? this quiets conscience, and lays the best foundation for peace. Hence *the blood of Christ* is said to purge *conscience from dead works*, Heb. ix. 14. And *being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through him*, Rom. v. 1. The peace of those who have no better righteousness than their own, to cover their guilt, and bear them out at the bar of God, must be subject to perpetual alarms; every sin is enough to shake it, and every view of the justice, holiness, and authority of God is enough to supplant and overturn it. But when I can view myself clothed upon with a righteousness that God approves, and the law cannot except against, with what humble hope may I lift up my face before him? That which satisfies God, shall it not pacify conscience? and in what the law acquiesces as equal to all its demands, in retreating to such a righteousness, shall not every guilty fear subside? Where God is reconciled, shall not conscience be so too? And that which sprinkles the throne of justice, and speaks peace above, when the bosom is sprinkled with it, shall it not bring the peace home, and maintain a blessed calm there? *The blood of sprinkling speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

(4.) This

(4.) This righteousness gives a sure and undoubted title to all the blessings of the covenant in their fullest extent.

All our title to the blessings of grace is built upon it. Thro' this righteousness we have reconciliation to God, and are restored to his favour. Thro' this righteousness we have near and delightful access to God as a Father, and may approach him with humble hope and confidence as sitting upon a throne of grace. Thro' it God says unto us, *fury is not in him*: and admits, and even invites us *to lay hold of his strength, that we may make peace with him, and we shall make peace with him*, Isa. xxvii. 4, 5. We obtain *like precious faith, through the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet. ii. 1. And the gift of the Spirit, which is so essential to an interest in all other saving blessings, is only dispensed through him. *We are saved by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which is shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ*, Tit. iii. 5, 6. And *the blessing of Abraham is come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit*, Gal. iii. 14. Nor had the Spirit ever been given as the author of one saving grace, had not Christ opened the way for such gift by the merit of his death: as one * observes, " If the blood
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* Dr Bates, p. 223.

“ the Spirit had not been poured forth from
 “ heaven. The effusion of the one, was the
 “ cause of the effusion of the other. The
 “ rock that refreshed the *Israelites* in the de-
 “ sert, did not pour forth its miraculous wa-
 “ ters, till it was struck by the rod of *Moses*;
 “ to instruct us that Christ our *spiritual* rock,
 “ must be struck with the curse of the law,
 “ the *mystical* rod of *Moses*, to communicate
 “ the waters of life to us, that is, the Spirit,
 “ who is represented in scripture under that
 “ element.*

Finally, 'Tis a righteousness that establishes
 a firm and sure title to eternal life. In this
 train the Apostle lays out the believer's claim ;
that being justified by his grace, we should be
made

* And this is what some have, not improbably, thought was
 pointed out by the method, that was appointed under the law
 for the cleansing the Leper, Levit. xiv. 17. Where the di-
 rection is very exprest and particular, *that the oil should be put*
upon the blood of the trespass-offering ; or, as 'tis exprest in the
 28th verse, *upon the place of the blood of the trespass-offering*. First,
 The Leper was in such and such parts of the body to have the
 blood of the offering put upon him, and then to perfect his
 cleansing, *the oil must be put upon the blood, the place of the blood*.
 Mr Henry, upon the place, observes out of Bishop Patrick,
 “ That the blood seems to have been a token of forgiveness, the
 “ oil for healing, for God first *forgiveth our iniquities*, and
 “ then *healeth our diseases*, Psal. ciii. 3.” And then adds,
 “ wherever the blood of Christ is applied for justification, the
 “ oil of the Spirit is applied for sanctification ; for these two
 “ are inseparable, and both necessary to our acceptance with
 “ God——When the Leper was *sprinkled*, the water must
 “ have *blood in it*. ver. 5. When he was *anointed*, the oil must
 “ have *blood under it*, to signify that all the graces and com-
 “ forts of the Spirit, all his purifying, dignifying influences are
 “ owing to the death of Christ : 'Tis by his blood alone, that
 “ we are *sanctified*.” See Mather on the types, p. 321.

*made heirs according to the hope of eternal life, Tit. iii. 7. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Rom. viii. 17. And for this cause Christ is the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance, Heb. ix. 15. and, whom God justifies, them he also glorifies, Rom. viii. 30. Indeed, nothing but a perfect and complete righteousness, can entitle to a perfect and complete blessedness. Hence 'tis absolutely impossible, that we should found a title to heaven upon any obedience or works of our own; as an eminent writer * observes, that "a man might " more reasonably expect to buy stars with " counters, or to purchase a kingdom with " two mites, than think to purchase the heavenly kingdom by paying down his own " duties, and good works, which are no ways " profitable to God, and bear no more proportion to the infinite glory of heaven, than " a single cypher does to the numberless sands " of the sea." But thro' this most perfect righteousness of Christ, how does grace open out all its treasures? By it the Believer is restored to more, and greater privileges, than were lost by sin; nor can any thing be too great to be the object of that hope that is built upon it. We have boldness to enter into the holiest by*

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* Ep Hopkins, p. 382.

the blood of Jesus, Heb. x. 19. And Christ came, that his children might have life, and have it more abundantly, Joh. x. 10. and, much more being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him, Rom. v. 9. Our title to every blessing is complete in him; and whilst he is sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, how can the believer sometimes extend his views, and his claims, and wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body; wait the dawn of that day, when the body shall be redeemed from the power of the grave, and he shall, in his entire person, be put in full possession of all that blessedness, which Christ hath purchased for the heirs of promise and salvation? Rom. viii. 23.

To sum up all: The merit of the Redeemer's righteousness, rises higher than the evil and demerit of sin; nor can there be any thing in the one to lay under wrath and condemnation, but there is an infinitely superior efficacy in the other to deliver from it, and raise to life and glory. As the Apostle when instituting the parallel between the first and second *Adam*, representing the *one* as a head of Death, and the *other* as a head of Life, each to his respective seed, puts a *much more* upon the obedience and righteousness of the one to justify and save, than upon the sin and disobedience of the other to condemn and destroy. *But not*
as

as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation: even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life, Rom. v, 15——18. Not, may the humble Saint say, that I have deserved heaven, or that there is any thing in any righteousness of mine to entitle me to it; when I have done all, I am no better than an *unprofitable servant*: But as Christ hath purchased every blessing by the merit of his blood, upon that would I rest all my claims: Nor is there any thing in the glories of the upper and eternal world, but what his righteousness gives a firm title to, and will at last bring to the complete and everlasting possession of. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. v. 21.

Thus have I given a little view of the superior excellency and efficacy of this righteousness:

ness: 'Tis the righteousness of a glorious person, the Son of God in our natures, and who is God blessed for ever : 'Tis a righteousness that is fully equal to the demands of the law in its utmost purity and perfection : And finally, that is extensive and effectual for all the purposes for which we want it: it absolves from guilt, and frees from condemnation; denominates and constitutes righteous in the sight of God; is what the believer may plead against all the challenges and accusations of Satan, the law, and his own conscience; and what establishes an undoubted title to all the blessings of the covenant, those of grace, and those of glory.

It only now remains to obviate some of the principal objections, with which our adversaries of the Church of *Rome* have assaulted this fundamental doctrine of the reformation; and would to God, there were no reason to join any others with them in the reproaches with which it has been loaded, and in the methods that have been taken to weaken and undermine it. I shall not take notice of every little difficulty that has been started, but hope to give a satisfactory reply to all those objections that have any weight in them, from what quarter soever they may come. And,

I. It has been objected, that if Christ performed perfect obedience to the law in our
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room and stead, as 'tis supposed and pleaded he did, in working out this righteousness, that we shall be exempted and discharged thereby from all obedience to it; for how can the law demand the debt of the surety and the principal too? And thus the doctrine of justification by Christ's righteousness has been charged with opening a wide door to the worst sort of *Antinomianism*, by cancelling all the obligations of the moral law. To this I answer; that by the obedience and death of Christ we are delivered from all obligations to obey the law under that view, and for those ends, for which Christ was made under it, and obeyed it, that is, for the satisfaction of justice, for the working out a justifying righteousness, and for the procuring and establishing a title to the blessings of the new covenant: But it does by no means follow from thence, that we are delivered from obedience in every view, and for every purpose. The law, tho' it has been answered and satisfied as a covenant, still remains, and eternally will do so, as a rule of life, and the standard of all holy obedience; and our obligations to it under this view, are so far from being superseded by the perfect righteousness, and meritorious obedience of Christ, that they are greatly enforced and strengthened thereby: as the Apostle puts and answers the question with a just abhorrence, Rom. iii. 31. *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: Yea, we establish the law.* We maintain

the honour, purity, and perfection of the law ; we are only delivered from it, as a covenant by that most perfect and complete obedience which Christ payed to it ; but we still look upon ourselves under the highest obligations to conform to it as a rule : In point of duty, we obey it as the voice of our sovereign Lord ; in point of gratitude we obey it as the voice of our gracious Redeemer, *who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

II. It has been farther objected, that if we are justified by the perfect righteousness of Christ imputed to us, then we are as righteous as Christ himself is. But we may as well argue, that the debtor is as rich as the surety, because his debts are paid, and he stands clear in the eye of the law. Besides, 'tis not the essential righteousness of Christ as God that is imputed, but his righteousness as man and mediator. And when this righteousness is imputed to the believer, so as to be made his, for the purposes of his justification and acceptance with God, Christ still continues the seat and subject of it ; it was wrought out by him, and is inherent in him, he alone is the author of it, and the honour of working of it out belongs to him alone. “ Christ, as a judicious writer * has expressed it, “ is the efficient, and

* *Troughton's Lutherus redivivus*, Part II. p. 27.

“ and the subject of inherence of his own ac-
 “ tive and passive obedience, but the immedi-
 “ ate benefit of it as satisfactory to the law is
 “ the believer’s, and he is denominated righte-
 “ ous in that righteousness wrought out for
 “ him, and accepted in his behalf.” But how
 different is this from being righteous as Christ
 is?

A late celebrated commentator * has revived this objection, and endeavoured to give it a fresh edge, against the imputation of Christ’s active obedience for our justification, by pointing out several very great absurdities, which, as he apprehends, follow upon it; tho’ as far as I can see, without any great advantage to the cause which he espouses with so much warmth. As when he pleads, that if we were justified by such a perfect righteousness, being thereupon compleatly righteous as Christ is, there would be no need nor room for the remission of sins to believers; or, as he strongly puts it, they would have no more need to be pardoned than he had. But why no need nor room for the pardon of sin, because we are justified by a perfect righteousness, when ’tis certain that antecedently to the imputation of this righteousness, we are under the guilt and condemnation of sin, and after the imputation of it are sinning daily, (neither of which can, in any sense, be,
 said

* Dr *Whitby*. See his Discourse upon the imputation of Christ’s righteousness, in answer to Bp *Beveridge*, at the end of his Annotat. on the first *Epist.* to the *Corinth.*

said of him, whose this righteousness originally is) and sin is only pardoned through the imputation of it? There seems to be as little force in what this writer would insinuate next, that this doctrine destroys Christ's intercession for us; for how perfect soever the righteousness is by which we are justified, still there is room for him to intercede, that his people may be brought into, and, notwithstanding their daily and manifold sins, continued in, that state, in which they may enjoy the full advantage of it: And this I take to be at least one great purport of Christ's intercession, and upon this foot the necessity of it stands, according to what the Apostle has observed, 1 Joh. ii. 1. Nor is there any more weight in what this learned writer farther urges, that if we were justified by Christ's active obedience imputed to us, this would make his death unnecessary to procure any farther righteousness in our behalf, as having already in that a perfect and unfinning obedience, and what would give a full title to the promise, *do this and live*. 'Tis, indeed, readily granted, that if man had continued in his integrity, there would have been no need of any but an active righteousness for his justification: But as the law considers us as those that have already broken it, and we are such, the active obedience of Christ, however perfect in its kind, (and 'tis absolutely so) seems not to be sufficient for this purpose; because this has nothing in it that answers to a
violated

violated law, a law that hath been already broken, and in consequence thereof denounces its curse. In order to a sinner's justification, the honour of the threatening must be provided for as well as of the precept. But where were the provision for the honour of this, if we were to be justified only by a righteousness that has no manner of relation to it, as the active righteousness of Christ has not? Certainly, as the suffering the penalty can't be said to be all the righteousness which the law requires; no more, in case of guilt already contracted, can obeying the precept. There are some other arguments drawn from the same topick that are urged by this writer; but as they seem to be of less force than those already mentioned, let us go on.

III. But still it is objected; how is it possible, that that righteousness, which is in Christ, should constitute us righteous? 'Tis none of ours, how then can it be denominated and accounted ours? I answer, as well as *Adam's* disobedience, which was personally his, be accounted ours: Or our sins, the guilt of which was contracted by us, be charged upon Christ. And this is not done by any mistake, or error of judgment in the judge: The law looks upon the principal and the surety as one person; and justly charges to the account of the one the payment which is made by the other.

What

What has been now said of our being constituted guilty by the imputation of *Adam's* sin unto us, farther satisfies the common difficulty that was objected before, that if we are justified by Christ's righteousness imputed unto us, then we are as righteous as Christ is. For tho' by the imputation of *Adam's* sin our state is affected, and we really become guilty; yet there are many circumstances and aggravations in *Adam's* sin, which are peculiarly his: And it can no more be argued from our being justified by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, that we are as righteous as he, than it can be argued from the imputation of *Adam's* sin, that every one of his posterity are in every respect as guilty and criminal in the sight of God as *Adam* himself was*.

IV. Another objection against this doctrine, and that has been much insisted on, has been drawn from the way and manner, in which it has been supposed the Apostle *James* has represented the doctrine of justification, which he illustrates by the instance of *Abraham's* offering up his son *Isaac*, upon which he puts the question, ch. 2. ver. 21. *Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered Isaac his son upon the altar?* adding ver. 24. *You see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.*

But, I think, a satisfactory account may easily be given of this seeming difficulty, and that
upon

* *The Ruin and Recovery of mankind*, p. 404.

upon a little examination it will appear, that there is an entire harmony between what the Apostle *Paul* has asserted, *that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law*, and what the Apostle *James* here asserts, concerning our being justified by works. The views of the two Apostles were entirely different : The one is shewing how a poor guilty sinner may be justified in the sight of God, the God against whom he hath sinned, whose law he hath violated, *before whom every mouth must be stopped, and Jew and Gentile*, that is, *all the world become guilty*, Rom. iii. 9—19. Now this being the question with *Paul*, How a thus guilty sinner may be justified, that is, be absolved from his guilt, and accepted as righteous in the sight of God, he shews with the fullest evidence that this cannot be by any works or righteousness of his own ; must therefore be by the righteousness of another, even of the Lord Jesus Christ, imputed of God, and received by faith, or *accounted to the soul in believing*. And this he instances as the way, in which *Abraham* was justified, exclusively of all works whatever, Rom. iv. 3, 4, 5. Faith alone therefore justifies, as that alone apprehends and pleads with God that righteousness of Christ, by and for which we are justified. The Apostle *James's* view was very different. He is directing how those, that made profession of the gospel might so behave, that the faith which they boasted might appear to be true and

and genuine, and such as God approves; and consequently, that the persons who had it were in a justified state. To this purpose he tells us, that our faith must not be a dead, barren, fruitless, unactive faith: to boast of such a faith, and talk of being justified by such a faith, how vain? Instead of being justified by such a faith, (a faith that is accompanied with none of the proper fruits of it in acts of mercy and charity) says he, *he shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy*, ver. 13. And upon this he puts the question, ver. 14. *What doth it profit, my brethren, tho' a man say he have faith, and have not works? can faith save him?* that is, such a faith; adding, ver. 17. *Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead being alone.* Faith without works is plainly a dead faith, and shall this faith justify and save? 'Tis in reality no faith at all in the scripture sense of the word; or, as the Apostle argues, no better than the faith of devils, *for they believe, and tremble*, ver. 19. And he goes on to shew, that *Abraham's* faith, that faith whereby that eminent Patriarch was justified, was far from being such a faith. And for this he appeals to a well-known and remarkable fact, ver. 21. *Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?* That is, did it not plainly appear by what *Abraham* did in obedience to the command of God in that signal instance of duty,

that

that his was a true, real, lively faith, and that by this he approved himself to be a justified person? And the fact, which the Apostle here refers to in proof of that justification, of which he was treating, plainly proves that it was not by this work, this act of obedience, that *Abraham* was justified; for he was long before this in a justified state, as appears by Gen. xv. 6. where 'tis said, *Abraham believed God; and he counted it to him for righteousness*: which was according to the lowest computation thirty years, and some have made it a great deal more, before the offering up of *Isaac*. He was therefore, long before he performed this instance of obedience, a justified person, and in a justified state; consequently, this could not be the ground and reason of his justification. His *being justified* therefore *by works*, can only mean, that this work, this instance of ready and dutiful obedience to the command of God in so trying a case, was an evidence of the truth of his faith; consequently, that he was a justified person. His works therefore did not justify his person, but his faith; and so evidence his justification. And the Apostle himself gives us a plain key to this as his meaning, when he observes, ver. 23. *that the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness*. For how could he refer to this scripture, which speaks of *Abraham's* being justified by faith, in proof of his
being

being justified by works, but only as this fresh and eminent instance of *Abraham's* obedience proved the soundness and sincerity of his faith, and so shewed him to be a justified person * ?

Upon the whole, it appears to me with a good deal of evidence, upon a careful view of the whole passage, that the Apostle *James* was not stating the doctrine of justification, nor attempting to shew (which was the great question, as I observed before, that the Apostle *Paul* was debating) how a person, that is convicted of the breach of the law of God, and, in consequence of that, is under a sentence of condemnation, may be justified, that is, be absolved from his guilt, and brought into a state of pardon and acceptance with God ; this does not seem to be any part of the question that the Apostle *James* had before him ; nor does he intermeddle in it. He is only shewing, against the vain pretensions of those, who thought a mere notional and dogmatical faith sufficient for justification, how that faith by which

* Nisi Apostolus intelligeret justificationem istam *Abrahami* ex operibus declarativè, quorum diceret ver. 23. *scripturam impletam fuisse* quum obtulit filium, quæ dicit *Abrahamum credidisse Deo, & illi imputatum fuisse ad justitiam*. Sanè hoc absurdissimè diceretur si de proprie dictâ justificatione intelligendum esset, quomodo enim impleta dicitur scriptura quæ loquitur de justificatione fidei, cum justificatus est ex operibus ; sed commodissimè exponitur de declaratione, quia fides seipsum probavit per opera, & tunc aparuit verè, & non hypocriticè *Abrahamum* Deo credidisse, eamque fidem ut vivam & efficacem illi non abs re imputatam fuisse ad justitiam. *Turret. De Concordia Pauli & Jacobi, &c.*

which we hope we are justified may evidence itself to be real, and consequently, such as is of avail to justification; and this he shews can only be by works, the proper and genuine fruits of such a faith: And 'tis under this view only, that he insists upon the necessity of works to our justification; or, as evidences, both with respect to God and man, of the truth of that faith by which we are justified: I say, evidences, both with respect to God and man; for God himself speaks of this noble instance of *Abraham's* obedience as an undoubted proof of his religious regard to him, Gen. xxii. 12. *Now I know that thou fearest God*, “ It is apparent from what thou hast done, and thou needest do no more to evidence it*.” And surely man has no other way of knowing what our religious principles are, but by their fruits and effects, Mat. vii. 20. This view of the Apostle's design places the whole context in an easy light, perfectly agrees with what he says throughout upon the subject †, and gives a

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plain

* *Patrick* in loc.

† *Beza* has proved by several plain instances, that the word ἐδικαιώθη is sometimes used in this sense. Vide in locum, ut & in Rom. iii. 4. & 1 Tim. iii. 16. And agreeable hereto is what the Apostle says, ver. 22,—*that by works was faith made perfect*. Not that works add any thing to the perfection of faith, but only evidence the soundness and sincerity of it; as the fruit adds nothing to the perfection of the root, but only shews the strength and vigour of it. And in this sense the word ἐλεώθη is used, 2 Cor. xii. 9. *my power (τελειῶται) is perfected in weakness*; that is, as *Grotius* remarks, is illustrated and shewn to be perfect. And 1 Joh. ii. 5. *Whoso keepeth his word, in him is the love of*

God

plain and obvious method for reconciling the seeming difference between the two Apostles ||.

I can't conclude what has been said, without observing, that they seem to me to do great injury to the character of an inspired writer, who represent him as stating and explaining the doctrine of justification by faith, when 'tis certain that he makes no manner of mention of the death of Christ, nor hints any distant reference to that, and the interest it hath in our justification, tho' 'tis certain that every thing in our justification depends upon it. Nor do they mend the matter, who say that the Apostle *James* wrote on purpose to shew the true meaning of the Apostle *Paul* herein; for had he done so, would he have wholly passed that by, which *Paul* makes the whole basis of his discourse? But taking the Apostle's discourse in the view in which I have placed it, all he says appears just and proper, his expressions have a peculiar strength and force in them,
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God perfected; that is, fully evidenced and demonstrated to be in him. *Non potest quis validius ostendere Dei amore Se teneri. Grot. in loc.* So 1 Joh. iv. 12. *God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us; τετελειωμένη ἐσὶν, verè ac reipsa comprobatus, truly made to appear to be in us. Beza in loc. Vid. Tull. Justif. Paul. p. 153.*

|| If the question be, as it is here, What sort of faith it is by which a man shall be justified and accepted as sincere; a faith without works, or a faith with works? St *Paul* would have said the same that *James* does here. If a man be justified by faith, yet his faith itself must be justified, *i. e.* shewn to be true faith, by his works. *Wall's Critical Not. upon the New Testament.*

his instances are well chosen, and every thing is entirely consistent with what the scriptures have delivered throughout upon this subject.

V. Another objection to this truth has been drawn from the manner, in which the good works of the saints are mentioned in that sentence of absolution which passes upon them in the process of the last day, Mat. xxv. 35, 36. But can any thing be more evident, than that the good works of the saints are not mentioned there as the causes of their justification and acceptance to eternal life? Nor do they themselves depend upon them for this purpose, as is plain from their reply, ver. 37—39. They speak as tho' themselves hardly knew that they had performed such good works; most certainly, therefore, they are not what they trusted in, and had their dependance upon for their pardon and final acceptance with God; in this light, and for this purpose they did not remember them, and would not know them *.

* Usque adeo pii & electi, operum misericordiæ aliis exhibitorum non amplius recordabuntur, ut vix agnoscant, se ea quæ à Christo in extremo judicio prædicabuntur, præstitisse. Causa est, quia observarunt regulam illam Salvatoris, Matth. vi. 3. Sciunt etiam, opera à se præstita, imperfecta esse, & multa eis ob imbecillitatem virium humanarum adhuc deesse: Secumque statuunt, si vel maximè πάντα τὰ διαλαχθῆναι fecerint, se δούλους ἀχρεῖς esse, & vix debitam obedientiam præstitisse. Luc. xvii. 10. Nedum aliquid promereri potuisse: adeoque dulcissimum hoc Δεῦτε ἐυλογημένοι ex gratia & imputatione unici meriti Salvatoris sui audire. Schmid. in loc.

They are, therefore, only mentioned as they enter into the character of those that shall be saved, and whom the righteous and merciful judge will acquit according to the tenor of the new covenant : As one * justly observes, that “ Christ’s righteousness is never imputed to any, but where there is an inherent righteousness also; that is no *cause of our salvation*, but the *character of the saved*.” A like instance to which we have in what our Lord says concerning *Mary*, Luke vii. 47. *that her sins, which were many, were forgiven her; for she loved much*. Where *Mary’s* love to Christ is not mentioned as the cause of her forgiveness, but as the fruit and evidence of it : Whilst still the righteousness of Christ, and the free grace of God in and through him, are what alone found and support our claim and title to eternal life. Hence believers are described as *looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*. Jude ver. 21. And the Apostle prays for *Onesiphorus*, when recounting his many labours of love towards himself, 2 Tim. i. 16,—18. *The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day*.

VI. But still it is said, if we are justified by the righteousness of Christ alone, and faith therein, without the concurrence of any works of ours, what need then of good works? I apprehend I have already obviated this difficul-

* *How* Vol. II. p. 475.

ty, by shewing, that tho' we are not to be justified by our own works of obedience, yet are we nevertheless under the strongest obligations to obey the law as the unchangeable rule of duty, *being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ.* But I would farther add, that tho' good works are not necessary as the causes and means of our justification, which were to frustrate the whole design of the gospel, *for if righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain:* Yet are they still necessary, as evidences of the sincerity of our faith, as testimonies of our love to God, as the means by which we are to glorify him, and credit the profession we make of his grace, and, in one word, as the way in which we must walk as ever we would maintain communion with God here, and get safe to heaven at last. And therefore the Apostle *Paul*, who with so much strength and evidence establishes the doctrine of justification by faith in exclusion of all works; none more copious and earnest than he in exhorting Christians, upon all occasions, to the diligent and careful practice of them in their fullest extent. And 'tis very remarkable to my present purpose, that when he had given a plain and full account of the gospel method of justification and salvation as being all of grace, *Tit. iii. 5,—7. Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us—that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs ac-*

cording to the hope of eternal life; he presently subjoins, ver. 8. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works: these things are good and profitable unto men. I will conclude what I have to say upon this head, with a remark that I have somewhere met with in the writings of the excellent Dr Owen, “ that “ they, who know no use of good works but “ to be justified thereby, seem to know little “ or nothing of the whole gospel.”

R E F L E C T I O N S.

1. What a firm foundation does the righteousness of Christ lay for our faith and hope in God! 'Tis perfect and complete, and most extensive to answer all our guilt; what infinite justice can't impeach, nor an all-holy law charge with any defect. 'Tis moreover, the righteousness of a glorious person, the righteousness of God-man mediator; and the righteousness of God-man mediator, how effectual must it be for our relief, and how fully meritorious of every blessing? O how suitable is a Redeemer's righteousness to our case and wants; and how safely may we venture the weight of our salvation upon it!

2. How nearly does it concern us to look after and secure an interest in it! The highest and greatest purposes are answered by it; 'tis our
only

only title to the blessings of salvation, and in vain do we hope to stand in judgment before God without it. Shall we not then look after our own interest in it? To this purpose we should enquire——What deep convictions we have had of our own want of it; and what engaging discoveries of its superior excellency and glory. Have we received it by humble faith, and *do we count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of it?* Is our dependance drawn off from every thing else, and all our strefs laid upon it for acceptance with God now? and when we look forwards to the great day of accounts, is this righteousness the only ground of all our claims and hopes? And is that faith which we profess in it productive of the true and proper fruits of faith in our hearts and lives? in love to God, and all holy obedience?

3. How happy is the state of believers! They have a righteousness to fly to, and trust in, that will be found sufficient and effectual to protect from wrath, and entitle to every blessing. 'Tis what disarms the law, and answers the challenges of every enemy; screens from the whole curse due to sin, and draws the sting of every affliction; brings into a state of favour and acceptance, and in it the humble saint shall at length lift up his face before the throne with everlasting joy. On the other hand, and to conclude,

4. How great must be the misery of those who are without a gospel-interest in this righteousness, nor are seeking after it! What wilt thou do, O sinner! when a holy, just, and righteous God comes to debate with thee, and charge thy guilt home upon thee? when the law comes to open its terrors before thee, and thou seest awful justice closely pursuing thee, and thou shalt be found among those, who have rejected the grace of God against themselves? What an aggravation will this be of all thine other sins? Those who under the power of unbelief reject the provision, which God hath made in the death and righteousness of Christ for their pardon, what do they but in effect take upon them to bear the guilt and punishment of their own sins?

But I do but just hint these things; the fuller consideration of which must be reserved as the subject of our next discourse.

SERMON

S E R M O N VII.

ISAIAH xlv. 24.

*Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have
I righteousness.*

HAVING made some practical improvement of the several parts of our subject, as we went along ; it only remains to conclude with such inferences and reflections, as may offer themselves upon the whole taken together in one view. And may the Spirit of God bring these truths home to our hearts and consciences with saving power ! And,

1. Let us learn from what hath been said, to turn in upon our own state, and seriously consider our need of this righteousness. 'Tis a great and glorious righteousness, and what Christ hath wrought out at an infinite expence ; all the labours of his life, and agonies of his death unite to complete it. Shall we not then be sensible of our want of it ? To what purpose, indeed, was all this waste, if we don't want this righteousness ; have any righteousness of our own by which we may be justified, or if

if there be a possibility of our being justified in any other way?

Let us then pause a little, and examine our state in reference to the law of God. That holy and perfect law, whose commands are so extensive, and whose curse is so awful, where is the obedience which we have paid it? In what plain and evident instances have we broken it? broken it in thought, in word, and in deed? And, if we are not convicted of gross and open violations of it, and have escaped the greater pollutions that are in the world thro' lusts, to what irregular inclinations have we indulg'd, and how many secret propensities to sin can conscience charge us with, all of which are directly contrary to the purity and spirituality of the law? Or, indeed, is there any one action of our lives that will bear weighing in this ballance? Would persons be persuaded thus to view themselves in the glass of the law, how would it lead them into the knowledge of many sins which now they are ready to overlook, cure them of that self-flattery which is of so dangerous a nature, and give them that view of the plague of their own hearts, and the evil of their own ways, which would cover them with shame and confusion?

And, whilst we are convicted of so many offences against the law, have we any righteousness of our own, by which we may content and satisfy it? We ought to have made it the rule of our obedience, and God will make it,

it, in the Mediator's hand, the rule of his judgment ; most certainly, he will never justify the sinner in any way, that shall give the law the least occasion of complaint. Indeed, could we bring in the righteousness which the law calls for, the law would pronounce in our favour ; *the man which doeth these things shall live by them.* Yea, but instead of continuing in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them, have we not in many things offended all? And are we not still and daily offending? Surely then, with respect to the law, our case is the most deplorable, and all our hopes are for ever shipwreck'd. We have broken it, and are fallen under the curse of it ; are every ways unable to fulfil it, and 'tis absolutely impossible, that the guilty sinful creature should ever bring in a righteousness, that the law of God will acquiesce in. The attempting it argues the utmost unacquaintedness with the spirituality and perfection of the law, and with the state of our own souls. Is not this then our case, that we stand in need of a righteousness to justify us? have none of our own that is sufficient for this purpose, and must be for ever miserable without it? And if this be, as most certainly 'tis our case, and the case of all mankind by nature without exception, what reason have we,

2. To bless God, that he hath provided such a righteousness ; provided it in his Son, and
opened

opened out a way, in which we may be interested in it? How should we adore his wisdom and grace as shining out herein!

We should adore his wisdom in the appointment and provision of this righteousness. 'Tis one of the most wonderful instances of the wisdom of God, as displayed in the work of our redemption and salvation, to provide in the Lord Jesus Christ a righteousness for our justification equal to our guilt; and in which there should be at the same time such ample provision for his own glory. Upon which account Christ himself is called *the wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24. And *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are said to be hid in him*, Col. ii. 3. And in the dispensation of pardoning grace by him, God is said to have *abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence*, Eph. i. 8. Had all the men on earth, and angels in heaven, been called together to have sat in counsel upon this enquiry, how a guilty sinner might be justified, and justified in a way, in which God's highest indignation against sin should be manifested, and the honour of his law and justice maintained in their full glory, this would have nonplus'd them all: *This knowledge had been too high for them*, they could not have attain'd it. This is that great mystery of divine wisdom, which is opened out in the gospel, *even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory*, 1 Cor. ii. 7. And which contains *those things in it, which*
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the angels desire to look into, 1 Pet. i. 12. To see, the eternal Son of God submitting to be made a curse, that we might enjoy the blessing! to see, our life rising out of his death, and our hopes flourishing upon his grave! to see, every blessing the guilty sinner can want, the dear purchase of his blood, whilst every blessing as dispensed to us, is the effect and gift of the freest and richest grace! a full atonement in his death, and yet the sinner freely pardoned! in one word, God glorified, and the sinner saved! There is something in this method of grace, in this scheme of redemption, pardon and life, which bears upon it the clearest and most evident marks of the wisdom of God, that inexpressible wisdom which angels are contemplating with never-ceasing wonder and delight. *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God*, Eph. iii. 10.

We should likewise adore and magnify the grace of God, as what shines out with an equal lustre with his wisdom thro' this whole scheme. It was this, that moved for the providing this righteousness, when our circumstances of guilt and misery call'd so loudly for it, and substituted the glorious person who was to work it out; it was this that accepted it for the sinner, when God the supreme judge might have tyed him down to the terms of the first righteous covenant, and have insisted upon a
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personal and perfect righteousness of his own ; and established a new and *better covenant*, in which it is freely made over to the believer ; 'tis this, that reveals and makes known this righteousness, tenders and publishes it in the gospel for our acceptance ; gives the sinner a suitable and impressive conviction of the want of it, and faith in it, that faith whereby we receive and apply it, lay claim to it, and build all our hopes upon it ; Finally, that in believing imputes it to the soul, and justifies in and through it. Hence we are said, *to be justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, Rom. iii. 24. And *to have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*, Eph. i. 7. The Apostle well knew in his scheme, how to reconcile full atonement and justification by grace ; a plenary satisfaction and free forgiveness, tho' some men are so much at a loss to reconcile them in theirs. And says the Apostle John, *herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins*, 1 Joh. iv. 10. Such is the great appointment of the gospel ; and in every view of it grace shines out in its highest glory. What indeed can it be but the highest instance and expression of the matchless grace and love of God, to appoint his own son to take our nature upon him, and in that nature give up himself to the most grievous sufferings and to death itself, to make
atonement

atonement for sin, and work out everlasting righteousness? *Thou sentest thine own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin didst condemn sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us; and that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* How astonishing this grace! how immeasurably great! Shall we not do honour to it, and with highest transports of joy exult in it? What sins will it not pardon, and over what mountains of guilt and unworthiness will it not perfect its own designs? *The grace of God, and the gift by grace hath abounded unto many: and where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.* And what must that grace be, that *superabounds* to all the aboundings of sin? What a fullness must there be in it? And with what glory will it shine out, when the top-stone shall be brought forth with the united acclamations of *grace, grace unto it?*

3. With what seriousness and diligence should we enquire after our own interest in this righteousness? Can we join the Church in her language concerning it, *in the Lord have I righteousness?* is this righteousness ours, and are we justified by and through it?

And as this is an enquiry of so great importance, I would take the liberty to enlarge upon it. Christ is the righteousness of his people, their only justifying righteousness; is he your and my righteousness? There is no way
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of knowing this, that I can pretend to direct in, but by searching our hearts, under the guidance of the spirit of grace and truth, by the word of God, to see whether we know any thing of that frame and temper of soul, which corresponds to this righteousness, and always is, according to the settled order of the gospel, connected with an interest in it.

'Tis a righteousness that must be received by faith ; and that is always received with a very humbling sense of our want of it, and certain misery without it ; and where faith acts suitably towards it, it will produce highest love to the Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious person who wrought it out, and be attended with suitable obedience. Such dispositions as these we have seen the Church expressing towards it ; and by such things as these, *let us search, and try our selves.* O my soul ! be thou faithful herein.

(1.) Let me begin this great enquiry by asking, how far our consciences have been reached, and filled with deep and lively convictions of the necessity of this righteousness. I have observed before, that this is certainly our case, and the case of all mankind by nature, that we stand in need of such a righteousness: Have the convictions of this reach'd our hearts, and been impressed with evidence and power ? What have we seen, and felt of the evil of sin, and of the corruption and depravity of our own hearts ? Have we been humbled

humbled down at the foot of God under a sense of our guilt, and been made *to loth our selves for the evils, which we have committed in all our abominations?* and can't we look to the matchless holiness and purity of the law, but all our hopes of salvation by our own righteousness are struck down thereby? Have the convictions that have enter'd from this quarter been close and impressive? Have our bosoms been penetrated by them? and, under the force and evidence hereof, have we been brought to *put our mouths in the dust before God*, and cry out with the poor convinced jaylor, Acts xvi. 31. *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* and with that great multitude, whose hearts were savingly reached under the word, Acts ii. 37. *Men and brethren, what shall we do?*

Such an affecting and humbling sense of sin, and of our lost perishing condition by reason of it, always enters, and, under the influence of the spirit, paves the way for a suitable reception of Christ's righteousness; nor will it ever be welcome without it. Persons may talk what they will of pardon and salvation by Christ, but sure I am, none ever priz'd him as they ought, but those who have tasted the bitterness of sin, and had clear and just convictions of their guilt and misery: as himself has told us, that *they that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick*; and that *he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*,

ance, Mat. ix. 12, 13. The voice of his grace sounds sweet only in the awakened sinners ears : To such the provision and tydings of a better righteousness than their own is most welcome. The beating of the storm makes the harbour desirable ; and when we begin to feel how deep the wounds are which sin hath given us, with what earnestness shall we apply to the great physician of souls for healing ?

I can't close this head better than in the words of the pious and learned Dr *Owen*, whose praise has been long in the Churches, not only for his unanswerable defences of the great doctrines of the gospel, but for his great insight into every part of experimental religion and godliness. This excellent man, speaking of the use of the law, and of the necessity of the precedency of its convictions unto the orderly proposal and receiving of evangelical righteousness unto justification, and having asserted, that a convinced sinner is the only *subjectum capax justificationis*, has these remarkable words * ;

“ Let no man think to understand the gospel,
 “ who knoweth nothing of the law. God’s
 “ constitution and the nature of the things
 “ themselves, have given the law the precedency
 “ with respect unto sinners ; for *by the law*
 “ *is the knowledge of sin*. And gospel-faith
 “ is the soul’s acting according to the mind of
 “ God for deliverance from that state and con-
 “ dition, which it is cast under by the law.
 “ And

* Dr *Owen* of justification, p. 133.

“ And all those descriptions of faith, which a-
 “ bound in the writings of *learned men*, which
 “ do not at least include in them a *virtual* re-
 “ spect unto this state and condition, or the
 “ work of the law on the consciences of sin-
 “ ners, are all of them vain speculations.
 “ There is nothing in this whole doctrine that
 “ I will more firmly adhere unto, than the
 “ necessity of the *convictions* mentioned pre-
 “ vious unto true believing, without which
 “ not one line of it can be understood aright,
 “ and men do but beat the air in their con-
 “ tentions about it.”

(2.) Have we seen the absolute insufficiency
 of our own righteousness for our justification
 before God, and been brought chearfully and
 entirely to disclaim it for this purpose? It must
 come to this, before the righteousness of Christ
 will be prized, or can be received in the way
 that the gospel directs. *Dagon* and the *Ark*
 of God could not stand together : Nor can *self*
 in its pretensions consist with that supreme re-
 gard, which we owe to Christ, and the grace
 of God as exercised in and thro’ him. It was
 the sin of the *Jews*, and what in the end pro-
 ved fatal to them, that *they sought righteousness*
as it were by the works of the law ; and
being ignorant of God’s righteousness went about
to establish their own. And the self-justifying
Pharisee, in the gospel, Luke xviii. how
 does he approach God full of himself, *thank-*
ing

ing him he was not as other men, and producing a long list of his own duties and performances as his title and recommendation to the divine favour? Whilst in a quite contrary spirit, the poor convinced, self-judging Publican, how low does he bend, and with what humble diffidence in himself does he draw near? He hardly dares so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smites upon his breast, and when he opens his mouth, what is his plea but the alone mercy of God? God be merciful to me a sinner: You hear nothing of his own righteousness as the matter of his justification, of his own obedience as the ground of his acceptance. He judges himself, that he may not be judged. The mercy there is with God he will plead that, and in that alone will he hope; and whatever he has of his own, shall be kept quite out of sight, unless it be to arraign and condemn himself for it.

And upon this foot the whole plan of the gospel is formed, and all the experiences of the Saints are moulded. *Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them: According to the principles of the law, we are to be justified by our own obedience, Rom. x. 5. On the contrary, the righteousness which is of faith, that way of justification which the gospel institutes, speaketh on this wise; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised*

raised from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; believeth in Christ unto that righteousness for justification, which he hath not, nor can have in himself, ver. 6, 9, 10. And says the Apostle elsewhere, instancing how far our own works of obedience are from being the ground and reason of our justification, God justifieth the ungodly; that is, those who have no righteousness of their own to plead for their justification; and imputeth righteousness without works, Rom. iv. 5, 6. Not therefore by the sincerest and best works of our own, but by humble faith in the mercy of God, and the righteousness of Christ, so only can we be justified. Hast thou then been brought entirely to disclaim all confidence in thine own righteousness for thy justification? Seen the utter insufficiency of it for this purpose, and been brought in the chearful denials of faith to renounce and relinquish it? With the great Apostle and in his excellent spirit, counting all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ: and but dung that thou may'st win Christ, and be found in him. Hence,

(3.) Have we by faith received this righteousness, and been brought to an humble and stedfast reliance upon it? Do we indeed approve of it, and acquiesce in it; consent to receive it for the purposes for which it was designed, and make it the great foundation of our

dependance and all our hopes? This (as hath been formerly hinted) is the proper work of faith, and its most vital act as justifying; to receive the righteousness of Christ for our pardon and acceptance with God; to receive him as the Saviour of sinners, and the *atonement* in him: *Receiving Christ, and believing on his name*, in scripture-language, signify the same thing, Joh. i. 12. and Saints are said, *to receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of our salvation*, Pſal. xxiv. 5. The gospel itself is nothing else but a gracious proposal of Christ, and his righteousness to sinners for their acceptance. Have we closed with this gospel? and do we heartily consent to the gracious terms of it? Are we fixing the eye of our faith distinctly and steadily upon Christ? and whilst we give the firmest credit to the great things the gospel reveals concerning him, and the way of salvation by him, are we willing to be saved by him in his own way? accordingly, do we throw open the everlasting doors to him, and bid him welcome, *Come in thou blessed of the Lord?* O that Christ by his spirit would enter, and take full possession of my soul!

And whilst we thus accept of Christ, is it in the full extent of his mediatorial character; and in the same latitude in which the gospel exhibits him? Not only as our *righteousness* to pardon and justify us, but as our *sanctification*, to purify and cleanse us: Not only as our priest
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to atone for us, but as our king to govern us; and form us into a dutiful subjection to himself. And are we determin'd thro' grace to abide by him? Is our dependance on him fixt? And whilst we see our dearest interests in his hands, is this our point of rest, and are we saying, *if we perish, we will perish here?*

Speak then, soul; and tho' thou can't not say with the full assurance of faith, that thou hast an interest in Christ, and his righteousness, art thou steady and determin'd in thy adherence to him? *Dost thou cleave to him as an all-sufficient Saviour?* Can you never sit down to rest, nor call yourself happy without an interest in him? Can't you bear the thoughts of resigning your claim, and being separated from him? and if beat off here, don't you know to whom to look, and where else to apply? As *Peter*, when his steadfast adherence to Christ was called in question, resolutely replied, *Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life*, Joh. vi. 68. I know the Christian is meeting with many things to unsettle his hopes; but where the soul hath had a spiritual discovery of the excellency and suitableness of Christ, such a man will not easily forego his dependance on him. *He that believeth, hath the witness in himself*, 1 Joh. v. 10. There's something in gospel truths, when received by faith, and impress'd upon the heart with power, that brings establishment along with it: And 'tis then that every thing in Christ is dear,

when we can live upon the fullness of his righteousness and grace, under a sense of our own manifold sins and wants. Hence farther,

(4.) Has that view which we have had of Christ, kindled in our bosoms real and supreme affection to him? They that know him, as *in whom they have all righteousness*, can't but love him; and *to them, that*, under this engaging view, *believe in him, he is precious*, 1 Pet. ii. 7. True faith in Christ as our righteousness, *will work by love*; and the firmer and stronger our faith is in him, the warmer will be the flame of our love towards him. His person will be dear and amiable, *the chiefest among ten thousand*, and *the altogether lovely*: *We beheld*, says the Evangelist, *his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth*, Joh. i. 14. Faith sees those glories in the person of Christ, as God-man mediator, that make him supreme in the esteem of the soul, and cause all its affections to unite and center in him.

And where Christ is thus loved upon account of his personal excellencies and glories, his work as Mediator will have an answerable and the highest place in our regards. We shall rejoice in him as bowing to the burden of our guilt, and taking the heavy load upon himself, *bearing our sins in his own body on the tree*: We shall glory in him as satisfying all the demands of infinite unyielding justice, and *bringing in everlasting*

everlasting righteousness: We shall follow him from his cross to his throne, and with sacred joy see him pursuing the great designs of his death in all the glories of his exalted state: With a holy impatience we shall breath after farther discoveries, and clearer views of his grace and fullness, and our own interest therein; and in what way soever he makes himself known, we shall bow to every intimation of his will, and in all things study to honour him, and be to his praise. Our constant and most delightful care will be, to approve ourselves to him, and *none of his commandments will be grievous*. We shall love his people, his ways, his ordinances, and his worship; every thing that bears his image, and is inscribed with his authority; that comes from him and leads to him, and by means of which we may be assisted to keep up our communion with him: And when we can attain no higher, nor better evidences of our love, we shall still have this left us, a holy mourning that we love him no more, and a holy desire that we may love him better; whilst we shall still be essaying to join the Apostle, when he thought his love to Christ was called in question, Joh. xxi. 17. *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.*

The efficacy of faith is seen in nothing more than in filling the heart with such love to Christ as this. And where the heart is filled with such love, and brought under the influence
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and power of it ; what an evidence will this be of our interest in him ? Such may without presumption claim in all his fullness, and join in the language of our text, *in the Lord have I righteousness.* As in the case of *Mary*, Luke vii. 47. *Her many sins were forgiven ; for she loved much.* On the other hand, what are we in religion without this ; I mean without some real working of love to Christ, under a sense of his love to us ? *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity*, Eph. vi. 24. Grace and every blessing rest upon the head of all true lovers of the Lord Jesus Christ. But in what black characters does the Apostle describe the misery of those who are without such a principle of unfeigned love to Christ ; know, experience, and express nothing of it ? 1 Cor. xvi. 22, *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathama, Maran-atha.* Nothing, indeed, can be a more awful symptom : And where persons take up a profession of religion, and there's nothing of true love to Christ at the bottom to feed and animate it, what is such profession, how fair and specious soever it may look, but a mere empty, lifeless form, a shadow of religion and no more ?

(5.) Is our faith in Christ productive of real holiness ? Does it purify the heart, lay the ax to the root of sin, and engage in a vigorous and successful opposition to its reign and power ?

er? Whilst we rejoice in Christ, as *having all righteousness in him*, and as *made of God unto us righteousness*, is he made of God unto us *sanctification*? And are we *washed, and sanctified*, as well as *justified in his name*, and by faith in him? Are we acquainted with the agency of his spirit for holiness, as well as the efficacy of his blood for pardon? And whilst we build all our hopes of the one upon the merit of his death, do we derive from him as our living head all that grace that is effectual for the other? Are we *washing in the fountain opened for sin, and for uncleanness*? and does that grace, that brings salvation, and animates all our hopes of it, *teach us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*? Does it teach us *to deny our selves*, our dearest lusts, and every interest, and every enjoyment of life, when set in competition with a Redeemer's glory? Does it *overcome the world*? *Through the cross of Christ is the world crucified to us, and we unto it*? And are we *entreated, and persuaded by the mercies of God, to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service*? This is the genuine and peculiar tendency of that grace, which appears in Christ for pardon and salvation: When turned into a principle, and received in its power, it will produce true holiness of heart and life. And for any to separate the righteousness of Christ for justification from the work

work of the spirit in sanctification and personal holiness, is to tear in pieces the whole gospel.

Nothing, indeed, can be more monstrous, than to boast of the privileges of the gospel, whilst our hearts are full of enmity to that holiness that breaths thro' it, and our lives are the reverse to its whole design. To such carnal gospellers as these it was, that the Apostle *James* addressed himself, Jam. ii. 20. *But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?* adding ver. 24, 26. *Ye see then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also:* intimating, that 'tis not a *dead faith*, that justifies, a faith that goes no farther than a cold speculative assent to the truths of the gospel, and is without any effect and influence either upon the heart or life; but such a faith as is attended with real holiness, and is productive of true obedience; this and no other is the faith that justifies. And when things are taken in this connection, 'tis the vilest reproach upon the doctrine of justification by faith, that 'tis an enemy to good works: And never were the duties of holiness and new obedience so strongly enforced, and so warmly pressed as by the grace of the gospel; not indeed as the ground and reason of our justification (the honour of that belongs to him alone, in whom *we have all righteousness*) but
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as the inseparable attendants of that faith, by which we are justified, as such faith is the only spring and principle of them. Hence,

4. How should those, who hope they are interested in the righteousness of Christ for justification, improve this doctrine as the strongest motive to holiness and good works? The whole scheme of the gospel has a peculiar and most powerful tendency this way. Hence 'tis described to be, *the doctrine which is according to godliness*, 1 Tim. vi. 3. and *the truth which is after godliness*, Tit. i. 1. Nor shall this most important article of our faith be excluded this honour; every thing in it is the most friendly to the interests of holiness, and practical godliness.

In this way of our pardon and justification what an affecting representation have we of the evil of sin? True; we see it pardoned, and passed by; but in what a costly way, and thro' what precious blood? Judge of the evil of sin by the blood that was shed to expiate it; and how *exceeding sinful* must that be, and how hateful in the sight of God, which it was not suitable either to the perfections of his nature, or the dignity of his government to pardon, without giving such amazing proof of his abhorrence of it? And can our indignation be too warm against that, which nailed the Son of God to the cross, pierced him with such sorrows, and wounded him to the death? See him

him groaning, bleeding, dying ; see him making his soul an offering for sin, and pouring out his soul to death ; the bitter cup wrung into his bosom, and the beloved son crying out as forsaken of his God ; what words can express, or heart conceive the evil of sin, that hath done all this ? No such demonstration of the evil of sin ever was given before, or ever can be given again. What a powerful engagement should this be to forsake it, *to die unto it, and say unto it, get thee hence ?* As the Apostle argues, Rom. vi. 2. *How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein ?* For those that profess themselves *to be dead to sin*, by the death of Christ, *to live any longer therein*, what a contradiction to his death and all their hopes in it ?

And how should that love, that shines out in the way of redemption and pardon by the death and righteousness of Christ, fill us with the highest love to him, and quicken us to all the returns of gratitude and obedience ? *For the love of God constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead : And that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again,* 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Nothing has so constraining an efficacy as this, when it enters the heart with power. This determines us for the Redeemer's service, and animates our diligence therein. This fixes the heart for him,
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and gives life and vigour to every holy resolution. Such will give themselves to the Lord ; be for him, and not for another, and with growing delight press forwards in his way : They know they can never do enough for him, who has done so much for them ; 'tis perhaps one of the greatest burdens of their lives, that they do so little for him, and are no more to his praise : And the more their hopes of pardon, and every blessing are raised upon this bottom, the more still they will fear to offend him, to grieve his spirit, to dishonour his name and grace, and to sin against him. In fine, never does the humble saint find his heart more warmed for every instance of love, duty and obedience, than when he can gain the clearest evidences of the pardon of his sins in the blood of Christ, and of his gracious acceptance with God in and thro' him. This works upon the ingenuous mind, strengthens the habit of every grace, and whilst it cherishes and improves his love, disposes in the kindest manner for the right performance of every duty, by which God may be glorified.

Upon the whole, for any to take encouragement to *continue in sin*, that *grace may abound*, and upon a secure presumption that the death and righteousness of Christ will in the end avail for the pardon of it ; what is this but to *make Christ the minister of sin*, and wound him in his dearest glory ? 'Tis, indeed, the highest indignity we can offer to the grace
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of God: and where persons are left to draw such conclusions from it, nothing can be a more terrible symptom than this, that they have neither part nor lot in it. Let not persons deceive themselves: where any are going on in a course of sin, and making provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof; where they remain under the full unbroken power of reigning corruption; sin is not their burden, nor do they express any care to approve themselves to God in a course of holy obedience, whilst they make a profession of his grace, what a dangerous state of soul does this describe? and how plainly do such persons shew, that they know nothing of the grace of God in truth? *Ungodly men turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.* Study then, Christian, the grace of God in its tendency, and pray that it may be turned upon thy heart with power. Improve every privilege of the gospel as a fresh motive to holiness; and, whilst you hope for pardon and salvation by the death of Christ, cleave unto him with full purpose of heart, and follow on to know him: *Be growing up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ*; and, as he died for sin, reckon your selves to be dead indeed unto it; but alive unto God, through *Jesus Christ our Lord*: And whilst beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, in the face of Jesus Christ, pray that you may experience its transforming

transforming efficacy in your *being changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.* There's no way to keep up a comfortable sense of the love of God, and of Christ without this; nor to answer the great purposes of his death, *who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works: And bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness.* And the experience of those, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, will abundantly testify, that never are they walking more humbly with God, more fortified against temptations, and filled with more delight and joy in pressing forwards in all the ways of gospel-holiness and obedience, than when they can with believing views enter upon the love of Christ, and maintain a lively hope of pardon and salvation by him. To go on,

5. Is there so perfect and glorious a righteousness in Christ? How should we learn to prize it, to act faith in it, and in all our addresses to God for mercy plead it with him? We should think highly and honourably of it; 'tis an all-sufficient relief against all our guilt; what happily answers to the extent and purity of the law of God, and gives him the glory of all his perfections: And as he hath provided, and we can want no other, we should practi-

cally abide by this, and daily use and plead it. It may be proper a little distinctly to represent this.

Sinners should learn to apply to and plead this righteousness, when laid under deep and serious convictions of the guilt and misery of their state. This is often an hour of great distress and anguish of heart. And when a poor guilty sinner is thus awakened to a humble and penitent sense of his past sin and guilt, and begins to see how lost he is in himself, and to all help in the creature; feels his load, and is crying out in good earnest, *what he shall do to be saved*: What a proper season is this to look to the atonement in the blood of Christ, and the way of pardon and salvation by him? O may the convinced sinner say, “ here’s that
 “ which suits my distress, and speaks me blef-
 “ sed relief: *’Tis a faithful saying, and wor-*
 “ *thy of all acceptation, that Christ came into*
 “ *the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*
 “ He hath satisfied the law which I have bro-
 “ ken, and answered all the demands of divine
 “ justice; made full atonement, and brought
 “ in all that righteousness which I want: Nor
 “ is there any thing in the guilt of my sins,
 “ nothing to swell the account, but what his
 “ blood will be found effectual to expiate.”
 Upon this foot Christ invites those *that labour*
and are heavy laden, to come unto him, and pro-
 mises, *he will give them rest*, Mat. xi. 28. pro-
 mises, that *those that come, he will in no wise*
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cast out, Joh. vi. 37. and assures us, *that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men*, Mat. xii. 31. Only one sin excepted from the forgiveness of the gospel, and that not because 'tis so heinous, that there's no virtue in the blood of Christ to reach it; but because of the direct and settled opposition and repugnancy this sin carries in its nature, to the way of pardon and salvation by him.

Believers should likewise apply to and plead this righteousness, under a sense of their daily sins and miscarriages. These are many, and sometimes heinous. In their best duties they are sinning, and when walking most humbly with God, how do those infirmities abound, which call for daily and constant pardon? But besides all this: how are the children of God sometimes drawn into greater lengths, and overtaken with fearful back-slidings? They let down their watch, and grow remiss and careless in the way of duty; a carnal frame overspreads them without being pray'd against, and mourned over as it ought, and they give into many sinful indulgences and neglects: Thus by little and little sin gains ground, 'till at length they are surprized into grosser miscarriages. And how does the review hereof fill the bosom of the humble saint with bitter anguish? His soul is pained within him, and his heart can meditate nothing but terror, whilst *his sin is ever before him*, with every circumstance that can heighten and aggravate it.

But, in this most distressful case, we have blessed relief in looking to the satisfaction and righteousness of Christ ; the atonement in his blood, and the free and boundless grace of God in and thro' him. *His blood*, says the Apostle, *cleanseth us from all sin* ; its virtue ever abides the same for this purpose, and we have that righteousness in him which we may plead for pardon, when we have nothing else to plead. To this 'tis owing, that every sin they commit does not make a fresh breach between God and his people. We can never, indeed, be sufficiently humbled for our daily and abounding provocations : but when we have fallen by the power of temptation, and our wounds are bleeding afresh ; we are mourning under a sense of our sins, and begin to fear lest fresh guilt should awaken fresh wrath, let us fly to the righteousness of Christ, and make it the ground of our hope ; fix our eye upon it, carry it with us to a throne of grace, and urge it as our only, as it is, our all-availing plea for mercy. As the Apostle, in this view of the case, directs believers to the atonement and advocacy of Christ, as the only standing, and effectual provision of the gospel for their relief, 1 Joh. ii. 1, 2. *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous : and he is the propitiation for our sins.*

Farther, we should apply to this righteousness, and plead it with God under a sense of
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our manifold wants. The humble Christian finds many and great wants continually multiplying all round him. We want fresh and daily supplies of grace to carry on the work of sanctification, to strengthen us for every duty, and comfort us under all our sorrows; to build up the life of faith, to fortify us against our many temptations, and bear us up under all our infirmities: In fine, to enable us to fill up every relation of life with proper duty, and to persevere in the good ways of God to the end. O our many and daily encreasing wants! Well; amidst them all, we may apply to the righteousness of Christ, and plead this for all needful grace, and every blessing. Thro' it we may approach to God with holy freedom, and humble confidence; wrestle for the supply we want, nor take a denial; "*I will not let thee go, except thou bless me*"; and Lord "shall I be sent empty away, when I have the Redeemer's righteousness to plead for all I want and ask?" This is *that asking in the name of Christ*, to which so many and great promises are made, Joh. xiv. 13, 14. ch. xvi. 23, 24. 'Tis going for the blessing, as *Jacob* did, in the garments of our elder brother; nor can any blessing be too great for God to give, or for faith to ask and hope for, when the merit and righteousness of Christ are its standing plea. Through this righteousness God opens out the boundless and unexhausted stores of his grace; *gives liberally, and upbraideth not*. Through

this righteousness he allows his children to approach him as a reconciled, gracious God, and their God in covenant. *They have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for them, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh*: Are welcome at a throne of grace, and may put in their humble claim to every blessing. O the unspeakable privilege which believers have of going to God in prayer, in the name, and through the mediation and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ! As the Apostle gives us in this the sum and glory of gospel-worship, Eph. ii. 18. *For through him we both have an access by one spirit unto the father*. They that go in this way, how may they open out their wants, and *shew before the Lord all their trouble*? unbosom their souls in his presence with a holy freedom, and amidst all the infirmities and temptations of their present state, plead with a holy importunity for every needful blessing and supply? They may go as children, crying, *Abba, Father*. When bowed lowest under a sense of their own meanness, guilt and unworthiness, they have that which may raise and encourage their hope; *the lamb that was slain is worthy*: And when they have nothing else to plead, in his merit and righteousness, they bring along with them the price and purchase of every blessing.

'Tis no less highly proper and of great advantage to the Christian, to eye the righteousness of Christ, and exercise a lively faith in it, when 'tis an hour of great affliction. This is often the case with the people of God, that they are meeting with a variety of afflictions; they are *appointed thereunto*, and 'tis the standing doctrine of the word, that *through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God*, Acts xiv. 22. And as afflictions considered in themselves are not *joyous, but grievous*, O! what a mournful scene opens upon the poor Christian, when under his many and heavy afflictions a painful sense of sin is revived upon conscience, and in some dark and misgiving hour he is left to conclude, that God is renewing an awful controversy with him for former and unpardoned guilt. As *Joseph's* brethren, when present providences seemed to wear a threatening aspect, could not but reflect, *we are verily guilty concerning our brother; therefore is this distress come upon us*, Gen. xlii. 21. And this is what added to *Job's* distress in the day of his trouble, Job xlii. 26, *for thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth*. What a proper hour then is this, to apply to the righteousness of Christ, and renew the actings of faith in it? And when the afflicted saint can do so, and entertain some good hope of his own interest therein, how does this calm his guilty fears, and *make all his bed in his sickness*

for him? bear him up under his heaviest burdens, and even lift him into fresh life and hope? *The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.* He can now see the rod in a father's hand, and comfort himself, that 'tis only *if need be, that he is in heaviness through manifold temptations.* He can resign himself to the disposals of providence, and contentedly leave God to take his own way, and *do what seemeth good unto him.* He comforts himself, (when looking to the righteousness of Christ, and the free grace of God in and through him, he can do this upon the best grounds) that his sins are pardoned, and that all is peace between God and him; that therefore his sorest afflictions are only fatherly corrections, and shall have a gracious issue; that by all God is carrying on his own wise and merciful designs, and that *the end shall be of the Lord*; that however he may correct he will never disinherit, however rebuke and frown in providence, he will never utterly and finally forsake. As 'tis a blessed article of that covenant, which God makes with his people in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, and which is for ever established in him, Psal. lxxxix. 30,——34. *If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments: Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly*

terly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. Encouraging promise! and that has something in it, that is wonderfully fitted to sustain and support the people of God under their forest trials. How can the Christian under these views, sometimes even *kiss the rod*, possess his soul with patience and thankfulness under the afflicting hand of God, and with joyful hope look forwards to that better world, where *God shall wipe away all tears from the eyes of his people; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away?*

Finally, we should plead this righteousness, and act faith in it, when in the nearest views of eternity. 'Tis appointed for all men *once to die, and after death the judgment*; and that's the righteousness, that we want, that will carry us safe through *the dark valley*, and place us with acceptance at the bar of God: and, blessed be God, this is what the righteousness of Christ will do, when no other righteousness will, or can. 'Tis the righteousness of him, who is *the resurrection and the life*; what answers all the guilt of sin, and silences all the curses of the law, and so disarms death of all its terrors. Faith in this righteousness, *when flesh and heart are failing*, is like meeting death, as good old Simeon did, with the Saviour in our arms: And whilst the humble believer can see his claim and interest in it, how can he with a
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holy bravery bear up against the attacks of this last enemy, and in his dying moments look forwards with joyful hope? He *knows in whom he has believed*, and can with the greatest satisfaction commit his dearest interests into his hands. He is *looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*; and whilst trusting in the grace and righteousness of a Redeemer, can welcome the approach of death, and sometimes even challenge him out to the combat. As the Apostle shews in this light, how the Christian's conflict with death is maintained, and his victory over him ensured, 1 Cor. xv. 55,—57. *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* True, the body must e'er long lie down in the dark and silent grave, and take up its abode amidst worms and rottenness. But the virtue of the Redeemer's blood will reach it there, and in due time bring it forth to new and immortal life. And in what a glory will our redemption by the death and righteousness of Christ appear, when the body shall be commanded out of these chambers of death, and *vile* as it now is, and much more will be, when the grave has had so long possession of it, be recovered from all these dishonours, and *fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself?* Phil. iii. 21.

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And who can tell, what the glory of the body will be, when it shall thus shake of all the dust and defilements of the grave, spring up into new life, and be built up after this amiable and perfect model? *It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: It is sown a natural, it is raised a spiritual body.* And if the body shall then be so beautiful and glorious, what shall be the beauty, glory, and happiness of the soul, when that full salvation which Christ hath purchased for it by the dear price of his blood, shall be immediately and eternally enjoyed? This is that day of complete and perfect redemption, which the Christian is longing and waiting for; and how can he sometimes *lift up his head* with joy, when he sees it drawing nigh? Of such importance is it to keep faith awake and lively in the death and righteousness of Christ, in the near views of death, and judgment, and eternity.

Thus should we learn to apply to this righteousness, and support our hopes on it in the great and most important articles and concerns of the Christian life. This is making a proper and practical use of it, for the great purposes for which it was designed. When the Christian loses sight of this righteousness, how is his mind clouded, and his hope depressed, and what guilty fears are ready to spring up in his bosom? But when he can by faith
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realize it, and apply unto it; plead it with God, and live upon it; with what joy does it fill him, and with what growing hope does he press forwards for the better world? He finds that in it, which answers every distress, supports his dearest claims, and gives him humble confidence in life, and in death. This leads me to add,

6. How great must be the happiness of the believer's state, and with what satisfaction and comfort may he reflect upon it! He has an interest in a glorious righteousness; what is of greatest value in itself, and shall be effectual for the obtaining every blessing. He is of the happy number of those *to whom God doth not impute sin, and imputeth righteousness without works*. The righteousness, in which he claims, reverses the awful sentence of the law which lay against him, and brings him into a state of favour and acceptance with God; makes a blessed change in his state, and founds a sure title to all the blessings of grace, and to complete salvation. He that wrought it out was God as well as man; this gave his righteousness an unspeakable value, made it highly pleasing to God, and meritorious of every blessing. 'Tis perfect and without spot; what neither Satan, nor the law of God can implead; what carries in it a full answer to every charge of guilt; in it conscience acquiesces, and when God graciously reckons it to the soul

soul in believing, and justifies in and through it, *who shall condemn?* Death, the last enemy, can make no impressions upon the state and happiness of the soul, that is found clothed upon with it; 'tis superior to all his assaults, and a lively faith in it will at last give the faint a joyful triumph over all his power. 'Tis what supports the hopes of the dying faint, and under all the weakness of dissolving nature opens his prospect into eternity. 'Tis what will at last unseal the grave; fetch the sleeping dust out of the house of rottenness and corruption, and build up the whole man in immortality and glory. Under the protection and adornings of it, how will the believer *be found* at last *of God in peace, without spot and blameless?* whilst the exalted Saviour and Judge shall *present him faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy*; and bid him welcome to that state of final and everlasting blessedness, which God hath prepared for him, saying, *come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* And having brought safe to heaven, how will it maintain in the joyful possession of all its happiness, thro' the endless ages of eternity? In one word, 'tis of infinite value, and always, and to eternity the same: And whilst we receive and improve it by faith for the great and blessed purposes for which it was designed, how safe are our dearest interests, and what can undermine the foundation

foundation of our hopes? Blessed state of the soul, that is interested in it! What in life or death can make that man miserable? Death is unstung, and the grave vanquish'd; God reconciled, and every enemy subdu'd: All is safe for both worlds, and all shall end in the possession of that happiness, *which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man.*

7thly and lastly, Shall not unbelieving sinners stand convicted of their want of this righteousness, and certain misery without it? Oh that God would give them to see their want of it, and certain misery without it, in such a clear and affecting light, as may excite them humbly and earnestly to apply to it, and plead for an interest in it, e'er it be too late! If without a justifying righteousness, where sinner wilt thou appear, when God shall come to make inquisition for sin, and raise his throne for judgment? Thy state is sad now; thou art under the guilt of sin, and the wrath of God; and terrible and pointed is the threatening, that is levelled against thee; *he that believed not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God—and shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him,* Joh. iii. 18, 36. What then wilt thou do, when that Jesus, whose grace and righteousness thou now flightest and turnest thy back upon, shall appear in awful majesty,

jesty, as the righteous and universal judge,
 and summon thee to his bar? Can'st thou
 contend with him in judgment? or answer him
 one of a thousand? Or, whilst by unbelief
 thou equally despisest his authority and his love,
 where can'st thou hope to find that, which
 will skreen thee from the terrors of his wrath,
 and give thee confidence before him? As the
 Apostle puts the question and leaves it to the a-
 wakened conscience to answer it, *how shall we
 escape, if we neglect so great salvation; neglect*
so glorious a righteousness, and so great salva-
tion provided thro' it? Heb. ii. 3. If we neg-
 lect and despise the way of pardon and salva-
 tion by the death and righteousness of Christ,
there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. Nor
 will the guilty despiser of gospel-grace have
 any thing to plead in his own defence. *The*
man without the wedding-garment was speech-
less; and speechless will every sinner be, who
 shall reject and refuse this only righteousness
 for justification, this only way of pardon and
 salvation which is provided in the gospel. 'Tis
 the provision of infinite grace; and can'st thou
 hope that grace will protect thee from the re-
 sentments of justice, whilst thou pourest con-
 tempt upon the only way of pardon and salva-
 tion, which this grace has appointed? Will
 grace save to the wrong of every other per-
 fection? or save in a contempt of the only way
 of salvation, which itself hath appointed?
Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish.
 'Tis

'Tis an awful declaration of the Apostle, 1 Joh. v. 12. — *He that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.*

Upon the whole, hast thou sinner any sufficient righteousness of thine own to trust in, and plead with God, that thou thus disdainest the righteousness of the Mediator, and all the overtures of mercy in and thro' him? Or if thou thinkest thou canst do well enough without a better righteousness than thine own now, what wilt thou do, when death shall strip thee of all thy false coverings, and place thee naked at the bar of thy righteous and eternal judge? How will impenitent, unbelieving sinners, then *call to the mountains and rocks to fall on them, and hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the lamb?* Yea, but what can hide and shelter them, *in the great day of his wrath*, who shall then be found to have added this to the guilt of all their other sins, that they have rejected all that provision, which God himself hath made in the death and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ for their pardon and salvation?

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